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The Bulldog and the Thistle: The Effect of Thatcherism on Nationalist Movements in the United  
Kingdom

A Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the  
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts  
in Political Science

by

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September 2017

The thesis of Isabella Christina Gabrovsky is approved.

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United Kingdom

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Isabella Christina Gabrovsky

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## ABSTRACT

# The Bulldog and the Thistle: The Effect of Thatcherism on Nationalist Movements in the United Kingdom

by

Isabella Christina Gabrovsky

The purpose of this thesis is to explain the origins of the new wave of nationalism in the United Kingdom, particularly in Scotland. The popular narrative has been to blame Margaret Thatcher for minority nationalism in the UK as nationalist political parties became more popular during and after her tenure as Prime Minister. However, nationalism has always existed in some form in every nation of the UK, including England. This thesis asks, “How did Margaret Thatcher change nationalism?” because although the late Prime Minister is not to blame for the rise of nationalism in the past thirty years, there is a distinct correlation between the shift in national identity and political party affiliation, and the tenure of her administration.

The socio-psychological framework that Ted Robert Gurr created to explain “why men rebel,” has been a useful template to explain how nationalist movements can rise in multination states. Although the “rebellion” detailed in this thesis was not of the violent type for a variety of reasons, there was a revolution in how nationalist movements are executed in the United Kingdom, breaking away from nearly five hundred years precedence. It was the

Thatcher administration's economic policies and the perceived attitude of Thatcher herself towards minority nations that fueled a sense of deprivation in the minority nations of the UK, and ultimately reinvented how nationalist movements manifest themselves.

## Chapter I: Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the complexities surrounding nationalism in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and to specifically explain why internal nationalist movements and their associated political parties experiences a sudden rise in popularity after the 1980s. The current rise of nationalist political parties worldwide invites the question: how do these types of political parties gain momentum in states that have “winner take all” elections? In the past, “Duverger’s Law” has been shown to work in states that employ first-past-the-post (FPTP) voting methods. Maurice Duverger’s “law” states that democratic states that have single-member districts will ultimately become two-party systems with the two main political parties converging over the center of the political spectrum.<sup>1</sup> Despite the historic acceptance of his theory as law, it is now being questioned as FPTP states are increasingly becoming multiparty. However, the “third” parties in these states are more often than not nationalist parties in multinational states.<sup>2</sup> Japan, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the UK, and the United States (US) among others, should all exhibit two party systems according to Duverger. But the reality is that as of today, only the US remains a two-party state.

The increase of multiple parties in FPTP states is not necessarily due to Duverger’s Law being, according to Patrick Dunleavy, “a dead parrot,”<sup>3</sup> but because the states that no longer adhere to this law have a correlating trend that may not have been considered: the

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<sup>1</sup> Benoit, Kenneth. “Duverger’s Law and the Study of Electoral Systems.” *French Politics*. 2006, 4. pp 69-83.

<sup>2</sup> Duverger’s Law does not preclude the existence of multiple political parties in FPTP states.

<sup>3</sup> Dunleavy, Patrick. “Duverger’s Law is a dead parrot. Outside the USA, first-past-the-post voting has no tendency at all to produce two party politics.” *The London School of Economics and Political Science: British Politics and Policy*, 18 June 2012. <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/duverggers-law-dead-parrot-dunleavy/>. Accessed 6 August 2017.



increasing popularity of nationalist movements. The UK in particular is an excellent case study to see how nationalist movements can shift a FPTP state from having two, relatively centrist parties to having a multiparty system. Understanding the rise and trajectory of nationalist political parties in the UK will not only serve as a template to understand this trend worldwide, but also will serve as a general guideline to help understand the change in status quo and possibly better predict FPTP elections in this day and age.

I first seek to disprove the popular narrative that there exists a communal sense of a pan-British national identity uniting the minority nations in the UK which has succeeded in superseding any other national identity. I also aim to show that minority Celtic nationalism has always existed in the UK, and that even at the height of the British Empire, there were still popular movements resisting Westminster rule from within the UK. Nationalist movements develop and mature over time, yet the movements in the UK changed course rapidly in the last two decades of the 20th century. Using Scotland as a representative case study, this thesis seeks to illuminate the change from the traditional ethnocentric nationalism to the modern civic nationalism that is prominent in Scotland today. Nationalist political parties went from single-issue fringe political groups with no representation, to mainstream political powerhouses that dominate the politics of their respective nations. My hypothesis is that this sudden shift in narrative is to a large degree the result of the collective memory regarding the late Conservative Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and the policies associated with her administration, known as “Thatcherism.”

By beginning with a brief history of nationalism in each nation of the UK, I aim to provide context for the nationalist movements and political parties we see in mainstream British politics. This is important in establishing the collective memory of minority nations

regarding their place within the UK, but also to illustrate the patterns of nationalist movements. While each nation has a unique set of circumstances by which it joined the union, none are truly unique in their response. An unintended result of minority nationalism diverging from the traditional path, is the increase in English nationalism.

British national identity is relatively modern as a nationality, gaining traction with the rise of the British Empire under Queen Victoria. However, this “Britishness” was adopted by the aristocracy in lieu of “Englishness,” and not necessarily by the common people of the various nationalities of the UK. In each of the minority nations of the UK—the Irish, the Welsh, the Cornish, and the Scottish—there were battles for independence and cultural movements, but none were able to make it into mainstream politics. As will be discussed in later chapters, this situation changed demonstrably after Thatcher.

Margaret Thatcher’s policies of neoliberalism (1979-1990) were despised by a majority of Scottish voters. The fiscal policies of her administration (and in some cases, her attitudes towards nationalism and minority nations in the UK) have been credited with giving rise to the devolution movement in the UK, which established a Welsh assembly and reinstated the Scottish Parliament in 1999. Although it was actually under Tony Blair’s administration (1997-2007) that devolution occurred, it was indeed the adverse reaction to Thatcher in Scotland that renewed the case for Scottish autonomy, thus allowing Blair’s administration to build upon it as a legacy.

I will compare the results of Thatcher’s tenure with the changes in national identity, which suggests that the rise in regional identity affiliation was in reaction to Thatcherism. The nationalist parties of the minority nations, particularly in Scotland, created platforms around the position of being “anti-Thatcher.” Thus, these nationalists parties advertise

themselves as leftist and socialist. In reaction to the reactionary Celtic nationalists, the English nationalist groups have firmly planted their political ideologies to the right.

The UK has multiple nations, and overlapping national identities, both ethnic and civic. Moreover, each nation has a particular constitutional status. The complexities surrounding nationalism in a multi-national state with a rising immigrant population have made the task of deconstructing nationalist politics somewhat daunting. Before delving in, it will be helpful first to provide a list of definitions for relevant terms that not only lack concrete universal definitions, but that are also often incorrectly used interchangeably, so that the reader may better understand the nature of nationalism in the UK. I will also provide a brief section explaining the political geography of the UK.

### **Glossary of Relevant Terms**

The differences between a country, a nation, and state have become increasingly difficult to distinguish in the UK.

- A *nation* is a group of people with a shared sense of history and/or destiny.<sup>4</sup> The people can feel united by ethnicity, religion, or residence, but are certainly not limited to any one or all of these traits. Nations can belong to state or a country, but can also be “stateless” or transient, such as the Jewish people pre-1948, the Roma, or the British and Irish Travellers.<sup>5</sup>

Nations can split into smaller nations, but still have ties with the original group. The Irish, for example, can be seen as one nation that includes the diaspora in America, Canada,

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<sup>4</sup> See Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*. Verso. 2016.

<sup>5</sup> The Roma and Travellers are both commonly referred to as “Gypsies,” but are in fact of different ethnic descent.

and Great Britain, as well as the Irish in Northern Ireland and in the Republic of Ireland. This is a *meta-nation*, composed of those who are of Irish descent who no longer live in Ireland, yet still feel connected to the nation, as well as those who live and work in Ireland regardless of ethnic heritage. Ireland as a nation is split further still, as those who live on either side of the border between the Republic and the UK now share different experiences from one another, despite sharing the same land mass. There is a meta-nation, but also a variety of sub-nations that constitute “the Irish nation.”

The terms “country” and “state” are more often than not used interchangeably, but in certain cases, such as the British Isles, it would be a fallacy to treat these two terms as synonymous.

- A *country* is a territory with at least one national group in residence, but does not necessarily have sovereignty. Although it is part of the UK, Scotland can be considered a country because it has a recognized territory. Ireland is a country split between two states, the Republic of Ireland and the UK. It should be noted that there is also a difference between a *province* and a *region*. A province has specific territorial boundaries, such as the state of California in the United States. A region would be a distinct area of a state, country, or province, and has relatively fluid boundaries. For example, southern California is a region of California.
- A *state* is a political entity, a community of sorts organized under one central government. A state can be multinational like the United Kingdom, or a homogenous nation-state, such as Iceland. However, it should be pointed out that the ideal of a nation-state is somewhat of a myth. National identity used to be (and still is colloquially) synonymous with ethnicity, but if that were truly the case, no state would be a nation-state due to

immigration and annexation. France is often used as an example of a nation state, but there are many different ethnic groups within its borders (e.g. Basques, Bretons, and Marseillaise) and even a recent President of France, Nicolas Sarkozy, was of Hungarian descent.

The differences between nation, country, and state can be very nuanced and for most cases would go unnoticed. A helpful way to distinguish the differences in these terms in the UK is by sports teams. For the Olympics, teams are divided by states. The UK competes as a team, as does the Republic of Ireland. For the FIFA World Cup, each nation has team that competes—Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, England, and the Republic of Ireland each have their own soccer team. For the Rugby World Cup, teams are designated by country. For example, England and Scotland each get their own team, and the Irish team is comprised of players from both the Republic and Northern Ireland, as one country.

- *Nationalism* should be defined as the pride one feels toward one's nation, or as national consciousness. Nationalism is sometimes used interchangeably with *patriotism*, which should be distinguished as the pride or collective consciousness one feels for his or her country or state. The differences between the two can get muddled when a state develops a national consciousness. However, for the purposes of this these, nationalism will be in reference to nations, and patriotism will be in reference to states and countries.

## **Political Geography**

A brief introduction to the political and geographical landscape of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland clarifying the differences between Great

Britain, the United Kingdom, and all the countries within the Union is necessary to understand the complexities of national identity within this state. Although the UK has territories and protectorates, as well as a Commonwealth, I will not further complicate an already complex situation and will thus focus on the state as a political territorial unit. That is, I will be discussing the UK as a sovereign state. Citizens of the UK are referred to as British, which also leads to confusion in understanding the difference between Britain, Great Britain, and the United Kingdom.

It is commonplace to use Britain, the UK, and Great Britain interchangeably, but it is technically incorrect to do so, and certainly causes confusion. The British Isles is a geographical name, rather than a political designation, which refers to the islands in the northwest of Europe. Great Britain and Ireland are the two largest islands of the British Isles, Great Britain being the larger of the two. However, these two islands are also split between two sovereign states.

Great Britain hosts multiple indigenous ethnic groups and nationalities. Some of these groups are transitory, such as the Romanichal Gypsies, also known as Travellers, but there are also nationalities and ethnic groups in Great Britain that are indigenous to a specific territory. These territories with specific ethnic groups are considered to be countries within the UK. Some have a degree of autonomy, although none are sovereign from the UK as a state. The countries within Great Britain are England, Scotland, Wales, and Cornwall.

The “United Kingdom” is the union between Scotland and England, having joined crowns in 1603. England had incorporated Wales and Cornwall as provinces by 1543. When King James VI of Scotland inherited the English throne via his aunt, Queen Elizabeth I, the two kingdoms of Scotland and England united the entire island of Great Britain, thus “The

United Kingdom of Great Britain.” Scotland has different customs and languages (Scots and Gaelic) that separate it from the rest of the United Kingdom, but it also has maintained a distinct legal system, currency, and education system.

Wales, too, has a separate culture and language from the rest of England, but due to a difference in constitutional status, that of being a province of England, it was politically indistinguishable from England until the Acts of Devolution in the late 1990s. Although the people of Cornwall also boast a difference culture, language, and ethnicity, they are still considered to be a region of England, and have no separate constitutional status in the way that Scotland and Wales do.

Ireland was not a unitary state before being colonized by the UK, but became a “full member” of the state after the Act of Union in 1801. Thus, the United Kingdom of Great Britain became the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. After nearly 300 years of violent rebellion, the political union between Ireland and Great Britain was finally negotiated in 1800. The UK would retain six counties in the north of Ireland as part of the union, hence the official state name: the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the rest of the island would become the Irish Free State. In 1949, the Dáil (the Irish legislature) passed the Republic of Ireland Act which would not only rebrand the Irish Free State as a republic, thus removing any British authority within its borders, but it also withdrew Ireland from the Commonwealth.

The lack of a written constitution in the UK and the ever changing status of the degrees of autonomy of the nations within its borders allows for ambiguity. It is more often than not that tourists and visiting celebrities will mistake Scotland for part of England, or assume that Ireland is still part of the UK, but these are also common mistakes made by

Britons themselves. Although all Cornish, Welsh, Scottish, and English are equally British, there are still headlines such as “British people announce wish to move to Scotland after Theresa May commits UK to leaving EU Single Market,”<sup>6</sup> indicating that there are still some unaware that Scots too are British. Although the minority nations may no longer *feel* British, as will be discussed later in this thesis, they are still, legally, British.

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<sup>6</sup> Osbourne, Samuel. “British people announce wish to move to Scotland after Theresa May commits UK to leaving EU Single Market.” *The Independent*. 17 January 2017.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/british-people-move-scotland-theresa-may-brexits-speech-leave-eu-single-market-european-union-a7531921.html>





**Figure 1.** Source: Tong, Vivian. *Nations of Great Britain and Ireland*. JPEG file. Aug. 2017.

## **Chapter II: Historical Context**

The purpose of this chapter is to shed light on the various nationalist movements and national identities that exist within the United Kingdom and to deconstruct the generally accepted arguments that there is such a thing as a cohesive and standard British identity and nationalism, and that this “Britishness,” united by Empire and Protestantism, is stronger than fringe nationalism. This chapter seeks to demonstrate that, in reality, such a notion is merely a cultural myth. The intention of providing a brief discussion of the history of each nationalist movement in the UK is not to suffice for a detailed history of each nation, but rather to illustrate the narrative of minority nations in Britain by highlighting the moments in time that have shaped the collective narrative. These highlighted moments are but a few in a much larger history, and the majority of the pre-modern movements discussed here were only considered “nationalist” by later generations, as a result of the contemporary nationalists appropriating pieces of history to serve nationalist goals and thus reshape collective memory.

It is the ultimate aim of this thesis to show that while nationalism and nationalist political movements have always existed in the UK, it was only after Margaret Thatcher’s administration from 1979-1990 that nationalist political parties, particularly in England and Scotland gained momentum, and diverged from traditional positions and avenues. The nations and their nationalists movements to be discussed in the following sections are Cornwall, Wales, Ireland and Northern Ireland, Scotland, and England and “Britain.”

### **a. Cornwall**

The smallest of the minority nations in the United Kingdom, Cornwall, is the lower-most peninsula that juts out from England, just below Wales. Although Cornwall boasts its own unique language and traditions, it was only in 2014 that the Cornish were recognized as

a distinct national identity separate from the English. That April, the UK government granted “Minority Status” for the Cornish, an action required by the Council of Europe’s 1998 Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. It should be noted that this long-awaited national recognition was decreed only a few short months before Scotland’s Independence Referendum in September, perhaps as a measure to pacify Cornish nationalists.

Although Cornwall is generally considered to be a province of England, and “absorbed into the mainstream of English life,”<sup>7</sup> the process of incorporation that the Cornish experienced actually grants Cornwall a special constitutional status. Cornwall is technically a Duchy, an inheritable property to be held by the heir to the throne, the Prince of Wales (currently Prince Charles). But there also remains the fact that, having originally been a separate country, Cornwall was never formally annexed as a county of England, nor acknowledged in the Acts of Union which would have made it a member nation of Great Britain. In fact, one of the few written laws regarding Cornwall’s legal status, which dates back to Henry VIII, is the 1508 Charter of Pardon which establishes a separate “Stannary Parliament” for Cornwall.

Although this parliament of sorts last met in 1753, it was “revived” by Cornish nationalists in the late 1970s who argued that since the Charter of Pardon was still in the statute books, a separate Cornish parliament was still legally valid.<sup>8</sup> However, in 2007, Bridget Prentice, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, answered a question from Andrew George MP regarding Cornish autonomy by affirming that “Cornwall has always

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<sup>7</sup> Rowse, A. L. *Tudor Cornwall*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969. Print.

<sup>8</sup> The Revived Cornish Stannary Parliament’s arguments and manifesto can be found on their website, [www.cornishstannaryparliament.co.uk](http://www.cornishstannaryparliament.co.uk).

been an integral part of the Union. There are no treaties today that apply to Cornwall only. ...There is no special status for legislation which applies to Cornwall or to Cornish localities.”<sup>9</sup>

The “ordinary Cornish people” felt that they had “been granted a unique constitutional status to reflect their unique cultural identity.”<sup>10</sup> It was, in fact, their strong belief in a unique identity that led to rebellions in 1497 and 1549 against English rule. The first rebellion was against Henry VIII raising taxes in order to wage war on a still independent Scotland, a country that posed no threat to Cornwall’s border.<sup>11</sup> The rebellion in 1549 appears to be more than the typical Catholic region rebelling against a Protestant King, as the predominantly Catholic Cornish never expressly rebelled against Protestantism. Edward VI declared that a new English-language Common Book of Prayer must replace the traditional Latin mass, and this incited rebellion amongst the Cornish who had previously been allowed as Catholics to worship in Cornish<sup>12</sup> and thus perceived this as a threat to their unique language and traditions, as well as their relative autonomy. At least three thousand Cornish were killed, and a lasting result was that “the ruling classes may well have come to associate the Cornish tongue with rebellion and sedition...poverty and ‘backwardness.’”<sup>13</sup> Still, when surveying Cornwall for a book published in 1602, Richard Carew noted that if an English-speaking person was to ask for directions, they would be met with the answer “Meea navidna cowzasawzneek, I can speak no Saxonage.”<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Parliamentary Records: Daily Hansard-Written Answers 29 March 2007, Column 1671 W. <https://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200607/cmhansrd/cm070329/text/70329w0004.htm>

<sup>10</sup> Stoye, Mark. “The Cornish: A Neglected Nation?” BBC. 2011.

<sup>11</sup> The taxation misstep will be further explored as a pattern in a later chapter of this Thesis.

<sup>12</sup> Stoye, Mark. *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> Carew, Richard. *The Survey of Cornwall*. eds 1769. 56

Today, Cornwall is not even recognized as a separate region, let alone as a country, and perhaps as a consequence there is growing support for a separate Cornish Assembly, such as the assemblies granted to Wales and Northern Ireland, as a result of the Act of Devolution in 1998. In 2001, a petition for Cornish devolved powers with 50,000 signatures—roughly 10% of the population of Cornwall— was submitted to then Prime Minister Tony Blair. Since then, Cornwall has made small steps towards greater autonomy. In 2009, a unitary council was made for Cornwall, giving it authority over decisions regarding roads, schools, and other local issues. Although Mr Blair at the time claimed that there was little public support for Cornish devolution, polls taken in 2014 by the University of Exeter and Pirate FM (a Cornish radio station) both indicated that over 60% of Cornish people favor greater powers for Cornwall.

The Cornish language has experienced a revival since its near extinction, with schools offering courses as a result of funding from the EU and UK governments in accordance with EU acts that legislate the protection of the languages and cultures of minority nations. In the last UK census, eight out of ten people in the western districts of Cornwall listed Cornish as their primary language. For the first time, in 2011 the UK Census listed “Cornish” as a national identity. However, since Cornwall has only recently been considered as separate from England, there are very few statistics regarding national identity versus ethnic identity by location. There has been a small rise in reported violent incidents between Cornish nationalists and English residents. However, it is unclear whether these attacks are a new trend or only recently being recognized as the work of nationalist groups. These attacks are quite mild in comparison to the “Troubles” in Northern Ireland, and thus have been relatively ignored by the UK media. The Cornish militant group An Gof has been known to place

broken glass under a layer of sand on the Cornish beaches to “deter tourists,” and vandalize English flags found in gardens.<sup>15</sup> In July 2017, An Gof changed its name to the Cornish Republican Army and released a new manifesto online claiming to have a potential suicide bomber within their ranks and vowing to “prevent the ethnic cleansing of the people of Kernow (Cornwall).”<sup>16</sup> In the statement, the group took responsibility for firebombing an English-owned restaurant in Cornwall.

## **b. Wales**

Welsh identity and nationalist movements have waxed and waned over the centuries and have been complicated by the ambiguous status of Wales within the United Kingdom, or rather, within England. Wales was originally a conglomeration of principalities, uniting on occasion to fight the Danes, the Irish, and eventually what would become the English.<sup>17</sup> Wales was united under one prince, Llewelyn the Great, in 1228. The last sovereign prince of an independent Wales was his grandson, Llewelyn the Last, in 1240. After a series of battles and rebellions, Edward I of England had fully subdued Wales by 1294. Although Wales was

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<sup>15</sup> “Condemnation for 'An Gof' vandalism.” *The Packet* (Falmouth). Web. 25 April 2007. [http://www.falmouthpacket.co.uk/news/1352958.condemnation\\_for\\_an\\_gof\\_vandalism/](http://www.falmouthpacket.co.uk/news/1352958.condemnation_for_an_gof_vandalism/)

It should be taken into account that these nationalist Cornish groups had particular issue with displays of English flags in Cornwall, not the Union Jack. The Union Jack is the official flag for the UK, an overlapping of the Scottish saltire of St. Andrew’s Cross, the Cross of the St Patrick repenting Ireland (now just Northern Ireland) the English flag of St George’s Cross. The Cornish have their own flag, black with a white cross, known as St Piran’s Cross.

<sup>16</sup> Jackson, Russell. “Militant Cornish nationalists claim to have suicide bomber ready.” *The Scotsman* (Edinburgh). 10 July 2017. <http://www.scotsman.com/news/uk/militant-cornish-nationalists-claim-to-have-suicide-bomber-ready-1-4499485>

<sup>17</sup> “England” as we know it was still being formed by Anglo-Saxon and Norman forces fighting one another.

no longer autonomous, it remained a distinct principality as a dominion of the Kingdom of England.

However, in 1400 there was a nationalist uprising which would have ramifications for Welsh nationalism and identity for centuries. Owen Glyndŵr was the last native ethnic Welshman to hold the title “Prince of Wales.”<sup>18</sup> In 1400, Glyndŵr repossessed disputed lands after confrontations with King Henry IV and Lord Grey. Battles such as this over land or resources within Britain would not have been unusual for the time, but Glyndŵr is, nonetheless, recognized as the “father of Welsh nationalism” because, from 1400-1415, he launched a rebellion uniting all the Welsh against the English, thus creating a cohesive and distinct national identity. The Welsh Penal Laws<sup>19</sup> were introduced in 1402 and in addition to banning public assembly, stipulated that Welshmen could neither own castles, armor, or weapons, nor be employed as bards, musicians, justices, sheriffs, among a host of other limitations. These retaliatory laws even extended to Englishmen married to Welsh women.<sup>20</sup>

The Penal Laws against Wales were eventually repealed in 1624, under King James I.<sup>21</sup> In the meanwhile, Wales lost its status as a principality by being annexed and incorporated into the Kingdom of England under the Laws in Wales Acts of 1535 and 1542,

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<sup>18</sup> Interestingly enough, when Prince William, currently the Duke of Cambridge, inherits the throne, his son, Prince George, will be the first Prince of Wales having Welsh ancestry (through his mother) since the last of the Tudor Dynasty.

<sup>19</sup> These laws were passed as three separate acts: the Wales Act, the Wales and Welshmen Act, and the Welshman Act.

<sup>20</sup> The National Archives Website: Discovery: Uniting the Kingdoms, 1066-1603. Penal Laws Applied to the Welsh in 1402. [http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/utk/wales/popup/penal\\_trans.htm](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/utk/wales/popup/penal_trans.htm) (accessed 20 June 2017).

<sup>21</sup> King James I of England was originally King James VI of Scotland, but took the title “I of England” after England and Scotland joined crowns in 1603.

now also known as The Act of Union.<sup>22</sup> Constitutionally, England and Wales were now indistinguishable by status, and yet the inhabitants of the two nations were separated by class, wealth, language, and religion.

The Welsh have a long tradition of storytelling through epics, songs, and poems. The most prominent of these tales is the Mabinogion, in which readers are introduced to King Arthur.<sup>23</sup> These stories passed on through the years have remarkable nationalist tones when describing Welsh princes and princesses, and the battles with Ireland. Ernest Renan (known for his seminal lecture at the Sorbonne in 1882, “What is a Nation?”) writes of the Mabinogion and of the person to first translate the remaining manuscripts into English, Lady Charlotte Guest, in “Poetry of the Celtic Races” (1896) “...the Mabinogion, the pearl of Gaelic literature, the completest expression of the Cymric genius. This magnificent work...will one day attest how full of life the consciousness of the Celtic races remained in the present century. Only indeed the sincerest patriotism<sup>24</sup> could inspire a woman to undertake and achieve so vast a literary monument.”<sup>25</sup>

Renan notes that despite the Arthurian legends being so pervasive in Western European culture, the source of these tales was unknown: “The cause is doubtless to be ascribed to the

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<sup>22</sup> It should be noted that, “The Act of Union” can refer to these Laws in Wales Acts, but also to the Acts of Union in 1707 and 1800 for Scotland and Ireland, respectively.

<sup>23</sup> King Arthur is from Cornwall in these versions, but that does not stop the Welsh from claiming him as some form of national “Messiah” who will rise once again. See Henken, Elissa R. “Three Forms of a Hero: Arthur, Owain Lawgoch, and Owain Glyndŵr.” *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium*, Vol. 15 (1995), pp. 22-31

<sup>24</sup> An interesting point to make would be that Lady Guest was actually an English aristocrat from Lincolnshire, married to a Welsh MP, John Josiah Guest. It can be assumed that she learned Welsh from her husband, and that she showed nationalism in the more modern sense, free from primordial ethnic claims. Barczewski (footnote 22) suggests that Guest’s English identity may have framed the Mabinogion not as tales of Welsh independence and nation-hood, but as something more palatable to Victorian English readers.

<sup>25</sup> Renan, Ernest. *Poetry of the Celtic Races, and Other Studies by Ernest Renan*. Trans. William G. Hutchison. London: Walter Scott, 1896. Print. pp 3-4.



dispersed state of the Welsh manuscripts, pursued till the last century by the English, as seditious books compromising those who possessed them.”<sup>26</sup> He is most likely referring to the Penal Code of 1402. As a manual for nationalist sentiments, Stephanie Barczewski writes “the Mabinogion belongs to that mode of nineteenth century Welsh nationalism which tried to create a mythical and romantic national past, a past that could serve as a source of pride but at the same time made Wales appear archaic and quaint.”<sup>27</sup>

Despite the acts of 1535 and 1542, Wales suffered from the original penalties from 1402. Save for a few Welshmen such as Lady Guest’s first husband, the vast majority of Welsh were subsisting at poverty levels as farmers, iron workers, and coal miners. The Welsh uprisings from the late 1700s through the first World War were not overtly nationalist in the sense that very few were rebelling for Welsh independence. These were class uprisings, and the Welsh became a nation renewed again, defined by social status and wealth and made distinct by language and religion.<sup>28</sup>

There are few official records before the 1891 census indicating the strength of the Welsh language, but despite the schools being “English Only,” around 30% of Welsh claimed to be monoglots.<sup>29</sup>

Movements such as the Rebecca Riots, where farmers would dress as women and act out a skit before destroying tolls set up by English landlords, and the secretive Scotch Cattle

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<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.* pp 11

<sup>27</sup> Barczewski, Stephanie. “Myth and National Identity in Nineteenth Century Britain: The Legends of King Arthur and Robin Hood.” New York: Oxford University Press. Print. 2000. pp 121.

To clarify, Barczewski refers to the translation of the Mabinogi as being 19th century, not the tales themselves which were first compiled from the oral tradition in the 11th century.

<sup>28</sup> Crowley, Mark J. “Wales, Nationalist Protest, 19th Century.” *International Encyclopedia of Revolution and Protest*. Ed. Immanuel Ness. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009. 3497-501. Print.

<sup>29</sup> 1891 Census, accessed from <https://www.ukcensusonline.com/census/1891.php>.

group that acted as relatively non-violent vigilantes for fair business practices and workers rights, and the Tonypandy riots of 1910, set the stage for the Miners' Strike in 1984. The Miners' Strike ultimately helped shape Celtic nationalism during the 1980s and 1990s as a legitimate political force that would eventually lead to devolution in 1997.

Welsh nationalism is inextricably tied to socialism; Keir Hardie, an MP from Wales (1900-1915), commented on Welsh nationalist movements, "Like all Celts, they are socialists by instinct."<sup>30</sup> BBC History writes that Wales "could convincingly be described as the world's first proletarian nation."<sup>31</sup> There were some Welsh that advocated for Home Rule, inspired by the Irish nationalists, and as the majority of Welsh were working class it has been easy to conflate the class struggles with Welsh nationalism.<sup>32</sup> However, the common thread amongst all the movements was that there were no demands for independence (as was the case with both Scotland and Ireland) and the main concern was that the Welsh language and culture were being overcome by English immigrants to Wales and by the Westminster governments. Welsh in schools was required to be taught in English, if at all. Westminster politicians were quoted as saying that 'there was no such place as Wales,' and editions of *Encyclopaedia Britannica* had the directive "For Wales—see England."<sup>33</sup>

In 1865, just over 150 Welsh settled in Argentina orchestrated by the Rev. Michael D. Jones, "as a means of preserving the Welsh cultural community free from English

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<sup>30</sup> *Labour Leader*, 9 July 1898.

<sup>31</sup> "Industrialisation in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Wales." *BBC History*. Web. [http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/events/industrialisation\\_19th\\_century\\_wales](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/events/industrialisation_19th_century_wales). Accessed 30 June 2017.

<sup>32</sup> Case in point, a Welshman, Robert Owen, is considered by many to be the "founder of the Socialist movement." Ironically, Friedrich Engels is quoted as saying "English socialism arose with Owen." See: Breverton, Terry. *Immortal Words*. London: Quercus Publishing Plc, 2009. p 173.

<sup>33</sup> Morgan, Kenneth O. "Welsh Nationalism: The Historical Background." *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 6, no. 1, 1971, pp. 153–172. JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/259629](http://www.jstor.org/stable/259629).

contamination.”<sup>34</sup> Plaid Cymru, or the Party for Wales, established in 1925 has never advocated for Welsh independence, but rather for a return to dominion status.<sup>35</sup> Welsh nationalism has never been about establishing a nation-state, but about establishing cultural autonomy from English hegemony.<sup>36</sup> Efforts to preserve the Welsh language have been met with some resentment by English visitors. A recent example was a Welsh restaurateur interviewed by a newspaper in 2017, politely complaining that “A minority of English people do seem to be quite ignorant of the fact that people speak Welsh as their first language...we don’t speak it to make English people feel isolated.”<sup>37</sup>

In 1974, the Labour Party produced a Welsh manifesto that committed itself to establish an elected Welsh assembly, despite Labour’s continued opposition to Scottish devolution.<sup>38</sup> Calls for a referendum on devolution for both Wales and Scotland persisted despite an upcoming General Election in 1979 and an unlikely coalition of Labour and Plaid Cymru. The referendum failed for many reasons including infighting and lack of enthusiasm and commitment from London, but also due to an ad-hoc restriction requiring a majority voter turnout in order for the vote to be valid.

The 1979 referendum was essentially set up for failure,<sup>39</sup> but the anticlimactic defeat did not quell Welsh support for autonomy. In 1997, Prime Minister Tony Blair planned for a

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<sup>34</sup> *Ibid*, p 165. See also Baskerville, Eirionedd A. “Companion to the Welsh Settlement in Patagonia.” 2014. [http://www.cymru-ariannin.com/uploads/companion\\_to\\_the\\_welsh\\_settlement\\_in\\_patagonia.pdf](http://www.cymru-ariannin.com/uploads/companion_to_the_welsh_settlement_in_patagonia.pdf)

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid*, p 169.

<sup>36</sup> “It Is Unusual; Welsh Politics.” *The Economist* (US) 21 Mar. 2015. <http://www.economist.com/news/britain/21646769-why-wales-different-scotland-it-unusual>

<sup>37</sup> Jones, Mari. “Anti-Welsh Language Complaint at Restaurant ‘on Daily Basis.’” *Daily Post*. 27 June 2017.

<sup>38</sup> Wyn Jones, Richard, and Roger Scully. *Wales Says Yes: Devolution and the 2011 Welsh Referendum*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2012. Print. pp 8-9.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*. pp 7-14.

referendum on Scottish devolution, effectively reversing his party's policy on the matter and the Act of Union of 1707. He was urged and eventually convinced by his Secretary of State for Wales, Ron Davies, to include a Welsh referendum for executive devolution.<sup>40</sup> The Welsh vote took place one week after the Scottish vote, and both passed. Currently, Wales has an Assembly, which increased its authority to govern on a number of issues after another referendum in 2011. Again, this was by no means the culmination of Welsh nationalist movements. Later that year, the leader of Plaid Cymru, Leanne Wood, successfully campaigned for Wales to be recognized as a country (rather than a territory or, incorrectly, as a principality) by the International Standards Organization.<sup>41</sup>

Welsh nationalist movements have progressed with punctuated equilibrium, and in a direction that was anything but linear—but that does not invalidate it as a force to be reckoned with. Wales, previously seen, for the obvious reasons, as “Labour country,” voted for Brexit by nearly 53-47. However, the vote for leaving the European Union was not out of a sense of British nationalism. After all, in Wales “it was more common to see xenophobia directed towards the English-born population...than migrants from further afield.”<sup>42</sup> The Welsh enjoy generous funding from the EU as compared to what they receive from

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<sup>40</sup> This allows for Wales to have an assembly as opposed to Scottish legislative Devolution, which reinstated the Scottish Parliament that had been dissolved in 1707.

<sup>41</sup> “International body grants Wales country status after principality error.” *Wales Online*. 1 August 2011. Web. <http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/international-body-grants-wales-country-1813629>

<sup>42</sup> O'Hagan, Ellie Mae. “Wales Voted for Brexit Because it has Been Ignored by Westminster for Too Long.” *The Independent*. London. 25 June 2016. <http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/brexit-wales-eu-referendum-vote-leave-uk-ignored-by-westminster-a7102551.html>

Westminster. It is not that the Welsh have “developed Stockholm syndrome,”<sup>43</sup> but because as a nation the Welsh will always vote for more autonomy and voice.

### **c. Ireland and Northern Ireland**

According to the “British” national narrative, the secession of Ireland from the Union was a battle between poor Catholics and rich Protestants. If only it were so simple. The Normans invaded Ireland in 1169, then a conglomeration of kingdoms, and in 1171, Ireland became a papal possession with King Henry II proclaiming himself Lord of Ireland. Ireland remained part of a limited sphere of influence, and it was decades after King Henry VIII had proclaimed himself King of Ireland in 1541,<sup>44</sup> that during the reign of Elizabeth I, the English began to effectively colonize Ireland. With the coronation of James I, the Crowns of England, Scotland, and Ireland were joined. In 1609, the Crown sent English and Scottish settlers to seize lands from the Irish in the Ulster province (now Northern Ireland) as this area in particular had been resistant to British rule. The rebellions continued and culminated in the Confederate Wars from 1641-1653. Oliver Cromwell led a brutal invasion of Ireland in 1652, violently removing land from Catholic possession and bestowing it upon his Protestant followers.

One of the first large-scale nationalist movements against British rule was in 1798, led by a protestant, Theobald Wolfe Tone, now seen as the “father” of Irish nationalism. As a result of this particular *Protestant* uprising, in 1800 there was an Act of Union that supposedly gave Irish equal rights as citizens. However, many of the penal laws that had

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<sup>43</sup> Cosslett, Rhiannon Lucy. “I’ve Been a Closet Welsh Nationalist—But it’s Time I Came Out.” *The Guardian*. London. 26 September 2014.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/sep/26/welsh-nationalist-wales-independence>

<sup>44</sup> Colley, Linda. *Acts of Union and Disunion*. London: Profile Books LTD, 2014. Print. p 97

been institutions of English rule in Ireland were still de facto law. In 1829, Catholics were finally “emancipated” in the UK.

Historian Linda Colley writes that the Irish were “integral actors in the (British) empire,” citing how the Irish made up the majority of the British army in 1830, and that over 800,000 Irish were living in Great Britain by 1881 because the “empire’s multiple opportunities helped to render the Union more palatable.”<sup>45</sup> Unfortunately, there is no real evidence that the union was made more palatable. The Irish simply had no choice because they were literally starving to death and lacked the civil rights for social mobility. One need look no further than the Irish famine to explain why Irish men would join the British army, an employer that distributed regular meals, and why Irish families would emigrate to Great Britain. The famine lasted roughly from 1845 to 1855, but the effects of the failing potato crops were exacerbated by British laws such as the Poor Law Act 1838 and the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846,<sup>46</sup> as starving Irish were forced off lands and their other crops, such as corn, grain, and dairy were exported to Great Britain.<sup>47</sup> Colley creates a rather naive

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<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.* p 99

<sup>46</sup> The repeal of the Corn Laws were supposedly intended as a relief measure for the Irish during the Famine, but there is significant evidence that the repeal would have been enacted regardless, and that the famine merely helped speed the repeal process. See: Christine Kinealy, cited below. Irish scholars such as John Mitchel (*History of Ireland*, 1868) condemned the English for forcing Irish farmers to export crops during a famine, and that the repeal of the Corn Laws helped the English economy while exacerbating the famine in Ireland. Mary Foster contends in “Famine in Ireland: A Malthusian Crisis or Creation of England?” (*Michigan Journal of Economics*, Vol 3, Issue 2, April 1981. pp 46-56) that “English relief policies during the famine were inadequate and shortsighted.” Indeed, the influx of grain being imported into the UK as a result of the repeal lowered the prices of grain. Grain and oats were exported by the poor tenant farmers in Ireland, who subsisted on potato crops. Without potatoes to eat, and no profits from exporting grain, the farmers were left impoverished and starved.

<sup>47</sup> Kinealy, Christine. “Was Ireland a Colony? The Evidence of the Great Famine.” *Was Ireland a Colony?: Economics, Politics, and Culture in Nineteenth-century Ireland*. Ed. by Terrence McDonough. Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2005. 48-65. Print.

narrative, presenting the supposed integration of the Irish into the UK as occurring *despite* the famine and lack of civil rights. The reality is much darker.

A British newspaper, *The Times*, wrote in 1848 that the Irish people “have always been listless, improvident, and wretched, under whatever rulers... They have not participated in the great progress of mankind... We do pity them, because they have yet to be civilised.”<sup>48</sup> Should there be any doubt as to whether the famine was employed as a tool for ethnic cleansing<sup>49</sup>, the Census Commissioners in 1856 commented on the loss of nearly two million people in Ireland as “on the whole, satisfactory, demonstrating as they do the general advancement of the country.”<sup>50</sup>

In direct conflict with Colley’s rosy view of the state of the Union, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, the Earl of Clarendon, wrote in 1849 of British neglect in Ireland as amounting to “a policy of extermination.”<sup>51</sup> Articles in various papers wrote that “the Celts... will not work if they can exist without it,”<sup>52</sup> and “The famine—if there be a famine—is man made.”<sup>53</sup> Despite those within the UK doubting the validity of the famine or the helplessness of its victims, two stories in particular stand out in Irish collective memory.

The first, is that of the aid received from the American Indian Choctaw tribe, which having experienced the Trail of Tears a mere six years prior raised a sum of \$170 in 1847 to

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<sup>48</sup> *The Times*. 4 October 1848. Taken from Kinealy, Christine. “Was Ireland a Colony? The Evidence of the Great Famine.” *Was Ireland a Colony?* Edited by Terrence McDonough. Irish Academic Press. 2005. p 50.

<sup>49</sup> Coogan, Tim Pat. *The Famine Plot: England’s Role in Ireland’s Greatest Tragedy*. Palgrave MacMillan, 2012. Print.

<sup>50</sup> *General Report of Census Commissioners for Ireland*. (Dublin, 1856), p. lviii.

<sup>51</sup> Christine Kinealy. “Was Ireland a Colony? The Evidence of the Great Famine.” *Was Ireland a Colony?: Economics, Politics, and Culture in Nineteenth-century Ireland*. By Terrence McDonough. Dublin: Irish Acad., 2005. p 59. Print.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.* p 61

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.* p 56

give to the Irish people. This tale in particular is well documented, and a delegation from the Choctaw tribe visited Cork in 2017 to witness the unveiling of a statue in honor of the original donors, entitled “Kindred Spirits.”<sup>54</sup>

The second tale recalls the efforts of Khaleefah Abdul-Majid I, Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, who offered 10,000 pounds to “help ease the suffering.”<sup>55</sup> The Sultan was asked by Queen Victoria to reduce his offer to 1,000 pounds, so as to not contribute more than her own donation of 2,000 pounds. After reluctantly agreeing, he secretly sent ships full of food and aid to Dublin, and although the ships were met with a British blockade, they eventually docked in Drogheda and delivered the food to the starving residents there.<sup>56</sup>

Collective memory in Ireland regarding stories like these is important, because it accentuates the national identity of the Irish as separate from the British. There was a similar potato blight in Scotland in 1846, but the effects were mitigated due to British aid and the ability of wealthy Scottish farmers to suspend exports in order to feed their own. The Irish Famine, according to Robert Kee, showed that “the important divisions in Irish society were no longer those of race or religion, but those of class.”<sup>57</sup> In writing about the British perception of the Irish, Michael de Nie demonstrates in his book, *The Eternal Paddy*, that the Irish identity was at odds with the British in almost all facets— that being race, religion, and

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<sup>54</sup> Roche, Barry. “Cork sculpture recalls generosity of Choctaw Nation during Famine.” *The Irish Times*. 13 June 2017. <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/cork-sculpture-recalls-generosity-of-choctaw-nation-during-famine-1.3118580>

<sup>55</sup> O’Callaghan, Billy. “Turkish aid to Irish famine was highest form of compassion.” *The Irish Examiner*. 14 July 2014.

<sup>56</sup> The Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-ireland.en.mfa>

<sup>57</sup> Kee, Robert. *The Green Flag*. London, Penguin Books: 2000. p 178.



class. The stereotyped Irishman, “the Paddy,” was in “British eyes... forever a Celt, a Catholic, and a peasant.”<sup>58</sup>

The key turning point for Irish nationalist movements was the failed Easter Rising of 1916. All the leaders of the rebellion were executed by British forces except for Eamon DeValera, the future President of the Republic of Ireland, who was spared due to his status as an American citizen. There were more movements for Home Rule, essentially the fullest extent of devolution, but eventually in 1921, after a series of battles and negotiations, Ireland was granted independence, save for six counties—the territory of the UK now known as “Northern Ireland.”

Sinn Féin is a nationalist political party founded in 1905. It developed a military wing, the Irish Republican Army (IRA). Although there are dozens of nationalist political parties and militias in the history of Ireland (and subsequently Northern Ireland), what is unique about this particular party is that it is a major party in both Ireland and Northern Ireland. Sinn Féin has the ultimate goal of reunifying the Northern counties with the Republic, and the IRA was responsible for some of the violence in Northern Ireland from the 1970s onward, a period known as “the Troubles.” The IRA was not the only terrorist group fighting in Northern Ireland. However, they were (and still are) one of the only groups with a clear political agenda, this being opposition to British rule and the unification Ireland. The myriad Unionist groups terrorizing Catholic neighborhoods and carrying out their own executions have in common their opposition to being annexed by the Republic. However, they have varying political goals regarding the strength of ties with the Union.

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<sup>58</sup> De Nie, Michael Willem. *The Eternal Paddy: Irish Identity and the British press, 1798-1882*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press. 2004. Print. p 5

There is a long history of Irish nationalists trying to advocate for dominion status or Home Rule, and it has been a convenient narrative to explain it as impoverished Catholics vs wealthy “Anglo-Irish” Protestants. However, this narrative ignores more than just the seminal nationalist uprising, led by Wolfe Tone. Among the notable contradictions to this narrative are Erskine Childers, who was an English civil servant and Irish republican<sup>59</sup>; Countess Markievicz,<sup>60</sup> who was born in London and moved to Dublin after marrying a Polish Count, became an Irish Republican, fought in the Easter Rising of 1916, and became the first elected female politician in the UK as an MP for Sinn Féin; and James Conolly, one of the many executed for his role in the Easter Rising<sup>61</sup>, although a Scot born to Irish immigrants, was residing in Dublin. Another Irish nationalist leader, Charles Stewart Parnell, was a Protestant, Cambridge-educated MP that led the political fight for Irish Home Rule.<sup>62</sup> In fact, Catholics were among the last to join the Irish Republican movement.

The historic Good Friday Agreement under the Blair administration effectively stopped the sectarian violence in Northern Ireland by allowing free movement between Ireland and the North, allowing those born in Northern Ireland the option of becoming Irish citizens, and permitting the Northern Irish to hold a referendum on joining Ireland that would be recognized by both countries.<sup>63</sup> However, this has not ended the violence. There are still deep scars and segregated neighborhoods, and to an outside observer this nationalist conflict is rooted in religious differences. For example, the Catholic neighborhoods will have

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<sup>59</sup> Kee, Robert. *The Green Flag*. London: Penguin Books, 2000. p 7.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.* pp 456-57, 631

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.* pp 492, 598

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.* p 364

<sup>63</sup> “The Good Friday Agreement and today.” Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Ireland). Web.

<https://www.dfa.ie/our-role-policies/northern-ireland/the-good-friday-agreement-and-today/>

Palestinian flags raised, and one can see Israeli flags in the windows of the houses of Protestant families.<sup>64</sup> The Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the troubles in Northern Ireland both have a religious element, but the flags are raised for nationalist causes. The Protestants in Northern Ireland identify with the Israeli cause as a people destined and entitled to live in a land granted to them by God. The Catholics side with the Palestinians, both feeling that they are an indigenous population subjugated by colonial occupiers. The divisions between Catholics and Protestants are ultimately not the root cause of the violent nationalism that we have witnessed in Northern Ireland, as we have not seen the same “troubles” in cities and counties with large Protestant populations in the Republic.

#### **d. Scotland**

Even though Scotland voted to join England and dissolve its parliament in the Act of Union in 1707, Scotland has always retained a modicum of sovereignty. Whereas Cornwall and Wales were both incorporated into England by 1543, Scotland joined crowns with England as a sovereign nation in 1603, and when they “joined” parliaments in 1707, Scotland still remained a distinct territory, separate from England. In addition to this somewhat ceremonial sovereignty, Scotland has kept a separate Church, a separate educational system, a separate legal system, and even separate currency notes. It is this distinctive civic sovereignty that has created a national identity apart from the romanticized ethnocentric nationalism of other independence campaigns.

Queen Elizabeth I had no children to inherit the throne, and so she named her nephew, James VI, as her rightful heir. James VI of Scotland became James I of England, and ruled over both kingdoms from London. A century later, in 1707, the Scottish Parliament

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<sup>64</sup> Hill, Andrew, and Andrew White. "The Flying of Israeli Flags in Northern Ireland." *Identities* 15.1 (2008): 31-50. Web.

was dissolved and Scotland was allowed to send less than a hundred Members of Parliament (MPs) to Westminster. However, the creation of this union was by no means popular or peacefully accepted. There were at least ninety-six petitions submitted to the Scottish Parliament to protest the terms of the proposed Union. There were violent protests and troops were sent in with orders “to shoot if necessary.”<sup>65</sup>

Animosity towards London, the Crown, and Parliament brewed throughout Scotland. According to Colley, novelist Daniel Defoe feared facing anti-English backlash and often posed as a Frenchman when traveling throughout Scotland.<sup>66</sup> In reality, Defoe was a well-known spy for the Crown and architect of the Act of Union in 1707,<sup>67</sup> and he certainly would have been a walking target for that reason, thus needing the French alias.

The Jacobites are perhaps the most famous of the Scottish nationalist movements, and launched rebellions in 1715 and 1745. The Jacobites were a group favoring the reinstatement of the Stuart dynasty as rightful heirs to the Kingdom of Scotland, and therefore, the Kingdom of Great Britain. Despite the common portrayal of Jacobites as Highlanders<sup>68</sup> rebelling against an English king, there were actually “English Jacobites” in Wales and Cornwall also plotting to rebel and reinstate James II. However, after losing some key battles in Scotland in 1720, James II fled back to France and the Jacobites that were not killed went underground.

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<sup>65</sup> UK Parliament Website; Living Heritage. <http://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/evolutionofparliament/legislativescrutiny/act-of-union-1707/overview/mob-unrest-and-disorder-for-scotland/>

<sup>66</sup> Colley, Linda. *Acts of Union and Disunion*. London: Profile Books, Ltd. 2014. Print. p 89.

<sup>67</sup> Kerrigan, John. “The Secret Agent.” *The Guardian*. London. 7 March 2008.

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2008/mar/08/fiction.danieldefoe>

<sup>68</sup> This may be in part due to the popularity of the novels of Sir Walter Scott, whose romantic portrayals of Jacobite resistance entered into the popular imagination.

In 1745, another rebellion was planned, culminating in the tragic Battle of Culloden. The battle is reported to have lasted only half an hour, with over 2,000 Scots dead and 1,000 taken prisoner. After a series of public executions, retaliatory laws in 1746 and 1747 were introduced in Scotland, banning tartan and other “highland dress,” weapons, public meeting places, and bagpipes.

As was the case in Wales, Cornwall, and Ireland, nationalists movements in Scotland did not end after an Act of Union and quashed rebellion. During a labour strike in Glasgow in 1919, protestors clashed with police, and fearing “revolution,” the UK government locked Scottish soldiers in their barracks and sent in English troops and tanks.<sup>69</sup>

Scotland has consistently been to the political left of England, but with its 59 seats in Westminster compared to England’s 535 seats, the Scots are perpetually doomed to be ruled by a government they did not vote for. This was particularly damaging in the 1970s and 1980s. The Poll Tax, protested all across the UK, was introduced into Scotland one year prior to its implementation in England and Wales. There has been speculation that Thatcher used Scotland as a “guinea pig” because the loss of Scottish voters, should the Poll Tax become a failure, would be rather inconsequential to the Conservative party.<sup>70</sup>

Although the UK had had nuclear submarines in Scotland since 1968, they were extremely unpopular among the Scottish people.<sup>71</sup> Thatcher’s decision to replace the original

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<sup>69</sup> McQueen, Craig. “Remembering the day 90 years ago when tanks rolled on to the streets of Glasgow.” *The Daily Record* (Glasgow). 24 January 2009. <http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/uk-world-news/remembering-the-day-90-years-ago-1006816>

<sup>70</sup> Maddox, David. “Tories used Scotland as ‘poll tax guinea pig’.” *The Scotsman* (Edinburgh). 30 December 2014. <http://www.scotsman.com/news/uk/tories-used-scotland-as-poll-tax-guinea-pig-1-3646489>

<sup>71</sup> Bell, Eleanor and Gunn, Linda. “The Scottish Sixties: Reading, Rebellion, Revolution.” Rodopi. 2013. Print.

submarines with Trident missiles appeared to be another blatant disregard for the opinions of the Scottish people—over 80% of Scots oppose Trident<sup>72</sup>. In fact, the decision to place potentially unstable nuclear weapons in Scotland remains rather controversial. In the 1960s, when the UK and US governments were looking for appropriate harbors to host Trident, two were selected: Devonport and Faslane. Devonport was eliminated as a choice due to its “proximity to built-up locations and “increased public sensitivity to risk.”<sup>73</sup> Devonport has a population of 6,344<sup>74</sup>, whereas Faslane is located a mere 25 miles from Glasgow—Scotland’s largest city with a total population of 600,000. The unwelcome presence of nuclear missiles in Scottish waters added to the Scottish narrative that Scotland was being targeted as a “guinea pig” by those in Westminster, a narrative to be fortified during the Thatcher administration in the 1980s.<sup>75</sup>

In 1999, Scotland finally regained a sovereign parliament as a result of the Devolution Referendum in 1997. The Parliament has 129 seats and was granted powers to legislate on matters such as tourism, education, health, agriculture, and justice. “Reserved matters” cannot be legislated by the Scottish Parliament. These include abortion, broadcasting policy, civil service, common markets for UK goods and services, constitution, electricity, coal, oil, gas, nuclear energy, defense and national security, drug policy, employment, foreign policy and relations with Europe, most aspects of transport safety and regulation, National Lottery, protection of borders, social security and stability of UK's

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<sup>72</sup> Scottish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. “Poll on Trident and Scottish Independence.” 13 March 2013.

<http://www.banthebomb.org/index.php/news/trident/1425-poll-on-trident-and-scottish-independence>

<sup>73</sup> Chalmers, Malcolm. Walker, William. “The Nonproliferation Review” Spring 2010.

<sup>74</sup> Public Health, Plymouth City Council. “Area Profile: Devonport Neighborhood.” July 2014.

<https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/DevonportNeighbourhoodProfile.pdf>

<sup>75</sup> The effects of Thatcher’s policies in Scotland will be discussed in further detail in Chapter III.

fiscal, economic and monetary system. The discrepancy between the amount of powers devolved to the Scottish Parliament versus the powers still held by Westminster was one of the many rallying cries for an independent Scotland.

Of special interest is the referendum for Scottish independence in 2014. This referendum would not have been possible, or even considered, if the Scottish National Party had not won the 2007 Scottish general election.

The Scottish National Party (SNP) was founded in 1934, the result of a merger between the National Party of Scotland and the Scottish Party. A social-democratic party, it has consistently advocated the case for Scottish home-rule. The SNP won its first parliamentary seat in 1945 in a by-election, and lost it a mere few months later, not to secure another seat until 1967. The SNP has had continuous representation in Westminster since 1967, but until 2015 had never held more than eleven seats at a time.

With the creation of the Scottish Parliament, the SNP gained a considerable amount of authority as the second largest party in Scotland. In 2007, it won the majority of seats by one seat (47 seats, compared to the Labour Party's 46 seats), and formed a minority government. In 2011, the SNP won a clear majority and with the majority government formed, they were finally able to introduce a mandate to hold the referendum.<sup>76</sup> The Scottish Independence Referendum Act 2013 passed in the Scottish Parliament in June of that year, and the campaign for the referendum officially launched May 30, 2014.

The campaign was divided into two groups: the Yes campaign was in favor of independence and the No campaign, or Better Together, was in favor of Scotland staying in

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<sup>76</sup> It should be noted that the elections for the Scottish Parliament were designed to avoid a majority government by having both single-member district seats and representational seats. This makes the SNP victory in 2011 all the more remarkable.

the United Kingdom. The Yes campaign was a conglomeration of many different political and ethnic groups. There existed groups such as “English Scots for Yes”—English people that moved to Scotland and were pro-independence—, “Asian Scots for Yes,” and “Labour for Yes.” The Labour Party itself officially sided with the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Parties in the No campaign.

In June 2013, it came to light that the No Campaign had secretly dubbed its campaign “Project Fear.”<sup>77</sup> The No campaign warned Scottish voters of unintended consequences should they vote for yes: the UK would veto an independent Scotland’s bid for EU membership, Scotland would not be allowed to use the pound sterling (GBP), and even floated the rather bizarre threat that an independent Scotland would not be able to access episodes of the much-loved BBC television series, *Doctor Who*.<sup>78</sup> In a televised debate between Nicola Sturgeon, the then-deputy leader of the SNP and Johann Lamont, the leader of the Scottish Labour Party (and therefore a key leader in the No Campaign), a flustered Lamont opined “We’re not genetically programmed in Scotland to make political decisions.”<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Gordon, Tom. “One year on: will Better Together change its tactics?” *The Herald* (Glasgow). 22 June 2013.

[http://www.heraldsotland.com/news/13110663.One\\_year\\_on\\_\\_will\\_Better\\_Together\\_change\\_their\\_tactics\\_/](http://www.heraldsotland.com/news/13110663.One_year_on__will_Better_Together_change_their_tactics_/)

<sup>78</sup> Riley-Smith, Ben. “Scots ‘would lose access to BBC shows after Independence.” *The Telegraph* (London). 20 August 2014.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/scottish-independence/11046037/Scots-would-lose-access-to-BBC-shows-after-independence.html>

Interestingly, in the year leading up to the referendum, a new actor, Peter Capaldi, was chosen to play the title character of “*Doctor Who*.” Although Capaldi was not the first Scottish actor to play the Doctor, he was the first allowed to use his Scottish accent while playing the character. Many saw this as a concession to Scots that felt unrepresented by the BBC in an attempt to sway votes.

<sup>79</sup> *STV Scotland Tonight*. “We’re not genetically programmed in Scotland to make political decisions’ says Johann Lamont.” *Youtube*. Uploaded by Gerscowin. 25 February 2014.



Despite having the advantage of the BBC and a virtually unlimited budget,<sup>80</sup> these blunders cost the No campaign momentum in the polls. The Yes campaign had around 52% support<sup>81</sup>, and with only a month left before the vote, the No campaign kicked into high gear.

Prime Minister David Cameron, Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg, and Leader of the Opposition Ed Miliband published “The Vow” in the Daily Record. The Vow was a promise to the Scottish people that if they were to vote no in the referendum, Scotland would be rewarded with more autonomy. Assuming that three posh English politicians’ promises would not sway a majority of Scottish voters, former Prime Minister Gordon Brown, a Scot, was brought out from retirement to promise Scots further devolution, and warn them of the stark consequences attendant to independence.<sup>82</sup>

The true victory in the Scottish Referendum was the historic voter turnout—84.6% of voters went to cast a ballot. The No campaign won with just 55% of the vote. With the population virtually split in half over the issue of independence, it became clear that the vote was just the beginning of a new era in Scottish politics.

Following the vote, there were accusations and investigations into voter fraud<sup>83</sup>, demand for international committees to investigate after suspicious news footage of ballot

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nBH55ZeZU4w>

<sup>80</sup> JK Rowling alone donated one million GBP, comparing Scottish nationalists to “Death Eaters”—villains she created in the Harry Potter series based on Nazis.

<sup>81</sup> Brooks, Libby. “Scottish independence: yes campaign gets poll boost.” *The Guardian* (London). 2 September 2014. <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2014/sep/02/scottish-independence-yes-campaign-poll-boost>

<sup>82</sup> Watt, Nicholas. “Gordon Brown makes passionate appeal to Labour voters in final no rally.” *The Guardian* (London). 17 September 2014. <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2014/sep/17/gordon-brown-appeals-to-labour-voters-vote-no>

<sup>83</sup> Green, Chris. “Scottish referendum results: 10 counts of electoral fraud alleged in Glasgow.” *Independent* (London). 19 September 2014. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/scottish-independence/scottish-referendum-results-10-counts-of-electoral-fraud-alleged-in-glasgow-9742672.html>

counters<sup>84</sup>, and a personal admission by the Scottish Conservative Party leader that votes were counted ahead of time to predict the outcome of the vote<sup>85</sup> which led to a police investigation. Unionists violently attacked Yes supporters in Glasgow's George Square<sup>86</sup>, and the offices of the Sunday Herald, the only newspaper to support Scottish Independence, were set ablaze.<sup>87</sup>

As noted previously, Scotland has traditionally been the territory of the Labour Party. The 2007 and 2011 SNP victories in the Scottish Parliament were major upsets to the status quo, but nothing compares to what has been dubbed the “tsunami” of 2015. Former Labour Home Secretary David Blunkett was first to describe the unprecedented and unanticipated rise of the SNP after the referendum as a “tsunami,” and the term has quickly taken off.<sup>88</sup>

What could have happened during the UK General Election in May 2015 that would prompt politicians and scholars to compare the events to an enormous natural disaster? The simple answer is that the Labour Party lost Scotland.<sup>89</sup> Even the Shadow Foreign Secretary,

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<sup>84</sup> Kinder, Tabitha. “Scottish Independence: 70,000 Nationalists Demand Referendum be Re-Held After Vote Rigging Claims.” *International Business Times* (New York). 20 September 2014. <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/scottish-independence-70000-nationalists-demand-referendum-be-re-held-after-vote-rigging-claims-1466416>

<sup>85</sup> “Scottish referendum: Police assess postal vote allegations.” *BBC* (London). 25 September 2014. <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-29359318>

<sup>86</sup> Brooks, Libby. “Violence in Glasgow as loyalists attack pro-independence supporters.” *The Guardian* (London). 20 September 2014. <http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2014/sep/19/violence-glasgow-scotland-loyalists-attack-independence-supporters>

<sup>87</sup> “Police investigation into fire near Herald office.” *Herald Scotland* (Glasgow). 20 September 2014. [http://www.heraldsotland.com/news/13181064.Police\\_investigation\\_into\\_fire\\_near\\_Herald\\_office/](http://www.heraldsotland.com/news/13181064.Police_investigation_into_fire_near_Herald_office/)

<sup>88</sup> Journalist and Scottish political commentator Iain MacWhirter has even published a book about the 2015 election, entitled, “Tsunami.”

<sup>89</sup> As of the writing of this thesis, the result of the June 2017 “snap” election saw some Labour seats return to Scotland. However, an increase from one seat to seven not as impressive as the previous loss from 46 seats to one.

Douglas Alexander (Labour), who had held his seat in Westminster for nearly twenty years, lost his seat in a landslide to 20-year-old university student, Mhairi Black of the SNP.<sup>90</sup>

Prior to the referendum, Labour held 46 Westminster seats, the Liberal Democrats held 11 seats, the SNP held 6 seats, and unsurprisingly, the Conservatives had but one seat in Scotland. On May 7, 2015 the SNP won 56 seats, leaving the three other parties each with one token seat. In less than a decade, the SNP went from a regional fringe party to the third largest political party in the UK. What makes this sudden rise of the SNP so remarkable is that just nine months previously, they had lost the independence referendum and their long time and beloved leader, Alex Salmond, had as a consequence stepped down. Such a failure would certainly be expected to lower morale and begin the death spiral or at the very least the marginalization of the party—that is, if we view the referendum as a failed attempt at independence. In reality, the very fact that there was a referendum played out as a success for the SNP because this allowed the notion of Scottish independence to become a topic of mainstream conversation, rather than an idea dismissed as backwards and pointless. Worldwide attention was tuned into Scotland and how the Scots would vote and participation hit an all time high. With so many eyes watching, the referendum emerged as a sort-of “trial run” to see if Scotland should hold another referendum.

With such momentum in the referendum campaign, there became visible a “fault line” between the Scots and the rest of the UK. The referendum should be viewed as an awakening which ultimately mobilized the Scottish people and created a politically active society. This is because what happened during the referendum, as important and historic as it was, pales in comparison to what happened after.

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<sup>90</sup> “General election: Labour’s Douglas Alexander loses out to SNP.” *Financial Times* (London). <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/2/024af5f2-f51c-11e4-8a42-00144feab7de.html#axzz43HKlrdJh>

In Scotland, Alex Salmond stepped down as the First Minister and leader of the SNP, and the SNP deputy leader, Nicola Sturgeon, stepped up to the plate as leader of the SNP and the first female First Minister of Scotland.<sup>91</sup> Par for the course, but the electorate eligible to vote Sturgeon in as leader of the SNP expanded exponentially. Within four days after the referendum, the SNP experienced a 66% rise in membership.<sup>92</sup> On the day of the vote, SNP membership was totaled to be 25,642. By the end of the first week after the referendum, membership had trebled. By April 2015, a month before the UK general election, the membership was calculated to be around 105,000. Just for comparison's sake—the Conservative Party, the current government of the UK, has a membership of 149,000 members spread out across the entire UK. The SNP now has an estimated 110,000 members—concentrated in Scotland.<sup>93</sup>

Westminster's actions during the month after the referendum are of interest. Despite the Vow, William Hague, the Commons Leader, was quoted saying that granting Scotland more powers as a result of a No vote was “not government policy.”<sup>94</sup> Although David Cameron set up the Smith Commission to propose and create new powers for Scotland after

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<sup>91</sup> Clegg, David. “New SNP leader Nicola Sturgeon sets sights on winning Westminster vote with plan to link with Labour.” *The Daily Record* (Glasgow). 14 November 2014.  
<http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/politics/nicola-sturgeon-takes-over-snp-4626994#ZEmtpADSsKqL2GyK.97>

<sup>92</sup> Castle, Jill. “SNP membership rises to over 115,000 ahead of Holyrood elections.” *Herald Scotland* (Glasgow). 17 February 2016.  
[http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/14282688.SNP\\_membership\\_rises\\_to\\_over\\_115\\_000\\_ahead\\_of\\_Holyrood\\_elections/](http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/14282688.SNP_membership_rises_to_over_115_000_ahead_of_Holyrood_elections/)

See also: <https://www.rt.com/uk/189948-snp-membership-surge-referendum/>

<sup>93</sup> Keen, Richard and Vyara Apostolova. *Membership of Political Parties*. House of Commons Library Briefing Paper. 17/SN05125. 28 March 2017.

<sup>94</sup> “Hague: giving Scotland more powers if it votes No is not Government policy.” *The Herald* (Glasgow). 10 October 2014  
[http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/13179277.Hague\\_\\_giving\\_Scotland\\_more\\_powers\\_if\\_it\\_votes\\_No\\_is\\_not\\_Government\\_policy/](http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/13179277.Hague__giving_Scotland_more_powers_if_it_votes_No_is_not_Government_policy/)

the vote, the Scotland Bill that would deliver these powers passed in the House of Commons two years later.<sup>95</sup> The additional powers devolved to the Scottish Government via this bill are still limited. However, what passed with staggering efficiency and speed, was the English Votes for English Laws—otherwise known as EVEL.<sup>96</sup> Scottish MPs can now be blocked from voting on bills that are considered to be “English Only” or “English and Welsh Only.” However, all MPs (including the 535 English MPs) can vote on Scottish matters that have not been devolved to Holyrood. Rather than granting new powers for Scotland, Westminster further diminished the power and status of Scotland in the UK.

#### **e. England and Britain**

As the majority nation and cultural hegemon in the UK, England and her nationalist movements have been overlooked or ignored by history and conflated with “Britishness.” English culture, ethnicity, language, and customs have long been reappropriated as British, as have any English nationalist movements. More often than not, the English will identify as British before acknowledging their English heritage, in contrast to the Scots.<sup>97</sup>

This lack of distinct identity perhaps stems from centuries of attempting to cultivate a pan-Britannic cultural identity in the UK. However, it seems that the only ethnic group convinced of the British identity was the English. For example, in popular culture, the posh southern English accent is synonymous with what is referred to as a British accent, and

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<sup>95</sup> The *Scotland Act 2016*. United Kingdom. UK Parliament. By David Mundell. N.p., 24 Mar. 2016. Web.

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2015-16/scotland.html>

<sup>96</sup> Sparrow, Andrew. “MPs pass English votes for English Laws plans – politics live.” *The Guardian* (London). 22 October 2014. <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/live/2015/oct/22/mps-to-debate-english-votes-for-english-laws-plans-politics-live>

<sup>97</sup> See Curtice, John et al. *British Social Attitudes* Survey 30, Web.

<http://www.bsa.natcen.ac.uk/latest-report/british-social-attitudes-30/devolution/trends-in-national-identity.aspx>.

“England” has been used interchangeably with “Britain” even in a significant amount of political texts up until this century. In *“The English and The British,”* Bernard Crick expressed his frustration at the lack of distinction between English and British. “The sense of identity of the English is almost as difficult to specify as the name of the state...the most elusive thing is Englishness itself.”<sup>98</sup> The lack of English national identity leads Crick to chastise his fellow nationals: “We English must come to terms with ourselves...There is need to shed much dead wood and, above all, not to try and infuse everything that is English into the common property of British.”<sup>99</sup>

As an example of the English trying to distance themselves from their ethnic and national identity, St George’s Day—England’s national Saint’s day, was not celebrated in Bristol, an English city, in 2016 because the city was deemed by council officials to be “too multicultural.”<sup>100</sup> By not allowing official events that could include all ethnic groups in a celebration of a national hero, the council effectively signed off national symbols to far-right groups, and aggravated moderates who feel that their identity is being edged out. For the sake of political correctness, national identity has become a symbol of ethnic chauvinism.

The process towards a more federal union with regional autonomy and devolved sovereignty for the Celtic minorities, rather than having the anticipated mollifying of separatists, had the unanticipated and unintended effect of creating a new “minority” nationalist—the Englishman. Recent polls conducted by the Institute for Public Policy

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<sup>98</sup> Crick, Bernard. “The English and the British.” *National Identities: The Constitution of the United Kingdom*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1991. p 91. Print.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.* p 104

<sup>100</sup> O’Brien, Zoie. “Anger as council officials say UK city is ‘too multicultural’ to celebrate St George’s Day.” *The Express* (London). 25 April 2016.  
<http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/663922/Anger-as-council-officials-say-UK-city-is-too-multicultural-to-celebrate-St-George-s-Day>

Research and the Future of England Survey suggest that the culprit is Scottish Devolution. That is to say, the legitimizing of nationalist groups and minority agendas in the UK has perhaps shattered the illusion that there was one Britain. By creating an “other,” and by forming distinct regional and national governments, there was a perceived need by the English to defend what was considered by the Celtic minorities to be the aggressor state, the conqueror. According to these surveys, the rise of the left in Scotland via the SNP in a devolved government created a vacuum that allowed the rise of the English new right.

The loss of English nationalism came with the creation of British patriotism, as England morphed into the British Empire. The English created a new civic nationality, British, to replace the ethnic nationality of English, so as to absorb each conquered nation under one flag. However, the decline of the British empire and then the emerging autonomy of those nations within the UK left England alone without a nationalism to match her country.

Novelist Daniel Defoe criticized the notion of an English identity, contributing a satirical poem entitled, “The True-Born Englishman.”

That het'rogeneous thing, an Englishman:

In eager rapes, and furious lust begot

Betwixt a painted Britain and a Scot.

...

From whence a mongrel half-bred race there came,

With neither name, nor nation, speech nor fame.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Defoe, Daniel, and P.N Furbank. *The True-born Englishman and Other Writings*. London: Penguin, 1997. Print.

The scathing verse was written with the intention of defending the “foreign king,” William of Orange, against English xenophobes. Yet, Defoe tapped deep into the English psyche, suggesting that there was no Englishmen for England—that they were a people without a nation, despite having a country and state.

Even though some English nationalist groups will have “United Kingdom” or “Britain” in their name,<sup>102</sup> this is a false flag. These groups are based and operate in England exclusively and their manifestos and websites explicitly state that they represent the English people and England’s national interests, thus making them English nationalist groups, not British nationalists. Although devolution has given voice to the nationalists from the minority Celtic nations and has even allowed for the city of London to have a degree of autonomy,<sup>103</sup> the rest of England was ignored, and thus the rise of far-right groups such as UKIP and the BNP, as well as the success of the Brexit vote in England, are simply reactionary English nationalist movements. However, the vast majority of English nationalist groups were established during or just after the Thatcher administration, which obviates *Scottish* devolution as the immediate culprit, and suggests that this surge of English nationalists can be traced back to Thatcherism.

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<sup>102</sup> The United Kingdom Independence Party and British National Party are notable examples.

<sup>103</sup> United Kingdom. HM Treasury. Department for Communities and Local Government. [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/597291/London-Devolution-MoU.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/597291/London-Devolution-MoU.pdf). By Philip Hammond and Gavin Barwell. N.p., 8 Mar. 2017. Web.



### **Chapter III: The Thatcher Administration**

Margaret Thatcher is certainly one of the more memorable Prime Ministers of the United Kingdom. She was the first female leader of the Conservative Party in 1975, by 1979 she became the United Kingdom's first female Prime Minister,<sup>104</sup> and she was the first Prime Minister in over 160 years to win a third consecutive term in 1987.<sup>105</sup> However, it was her economic ideals—which would become known as “Thatcherism”—and her attitude towards nationalist groups and minority nationalism that has also secured her a place as the most controversial political figure in modern British history. This chapter will first illuminate the origins of Thatcherism and Thatcher's rise to power. The second part of this chapter will discuss her agenda and policies during her tenure, and assess the economic and social effects of her administration's policies in Scotland.

#### **a. Thatcher's Rise Amidst “Discontent”**

The UK post-WWII was essentially a welfare state with benefits such as the National Health Service (NHS), free compulsory secondary education, and a planned economy. How could Thatcher's free-market and neoliberal economic reforms win over a population that had grown accustomed to the Welfare State?

The answer lies with the Labour administration preceding Thatcher. There were two elections in 1974, the first resulting in a “hung parliament,” and the second securing the

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<sup>104</sup> Seldon, Anthony, and Daniel Collings. *Britain Under Thatcher*. Essex: Pearson Education Limited, 2000. Print. Seminar Studies in History. pp 4-9

<sup>105</sup> Herman, Arthur. “Thatcher first prime minister to win three consecutive terms in 160 years.” United Press International (Washington DC). 11 June 1987.  
<http://www.upi.com/Archives/1987/06/11/Thatcher-first-prime-minister-in-160-years-to-win-three-consecutive-terms/6853550382400/>

Labour Party a majority of three seats.<sup>106</sup> To much surprise, Prime Minister Harold Wilson resigned in 1976, and James Callaghan, the leader of the Labour Party, was appointed Prime Minister.<sup>107</sup>

Callaghan inherited a myriad of problems, ranging from the Troubles, which had essentially developed into a Civil War in Northern Ireland, to calls for Devolution coming from Wales and Scotland. In addition, there were growing demands from powerful workers' unions, this ultimately bringing down Labour for the next eighteen years.

The "Winter of Discontent" refers to the public sector union strikes during the winter of 1978-1979.<sup>108</sup> The British newspaper *The Sun* was first to use this famous Shakespearean phrase<sup>109</sup> to refer to the labor strikes of that winter as hospital workers, garbage collectors, grave diggers, and other public sector workers went on strike simultaneously. The UK came to a standstill as garbage piled up on the streets and schools were forced to close as there were no caretakers or meals staff. The apparent dysfunction allowed Thatcher to push the Conservative agenda as a viable alternative to the Labour government with slogans such as "Labour isn't Working," and allowing her the ability to "portray the Tories as the party of law and order, offering Britain a new start after a prolonged period of chaos amounting almost to anarchy."<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> A "hung parliament" refers to a situation when none of the political parties secures a majority of seats after an election. The result of the October 1974 election was Labour gaining a majority of three seats.

<sup>107</sup> UK Government Website. *History: Past Prime Ministers*. "Harold Wilson."  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/history/past-prime-ministers/harold-wilson>

<sup>108</sup> The participating unions were the National Union of Public Employees (NUPE), Confederation of Health Service Employees (COHSE), General and Municipal Workers Union (GMWU) and the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU).

<sup>109</sup> "Now is the winter of our discontent / Made glorious summer by this sun of York / And all the clouds that lour'd upon our house / In the deep bosom of the ocean buried." *Richard III* (1.1.1-4).

<sup>110</sup> Seldon, Anthony, and Daniel Collings. *Britain Under Thatcher*. Essex: Pearson Education Limited, 2000. Print. Seminar Studies in History. p 6

Therefore, it was not so much that Thatcher's policies appealed to the British electorate, but that there was no other ready alternative to the debilitated Labour administration. Just as Thatcher secured her election to lead the Conservative Party by being the only available contender against former Prime Minister Edward Heath, so was she ushered in as Prime Minister more or less by default simply because there was no other alternative in the eyes of British voters. Although Thatcher had laid out her vision for a new Britain, free from government regulation and unnecessary public spending, "many Tory MPs and commentators doubted she would act on her rhetoric."<sup>111</sup>

### **b. Ideology and Agenda**

Thatcher was, in her own words, a "conviction politician," not one for consensus.<sup>112</sup> Thatcher was heavily influenced by the works of Milton Friedman and F. A. Hayek, and thus rejected the Keynesian model of economics that Britain had subscribed to since the Second World War. Her "neo-liberal" vision was firm, believing that big government was at the root of Britain's economic crises, and that government spending should be brought down to a minimum. Thatcher viewed economics as a field to be articulated simply and executed boldly. Regarding issues of the day such as rising inflation, she said, "It does not require A-level economics, or artificial labels like monetarism, to understand," arguing that her administration "will bring the growth of the money supply down."<sup>113</sup>

Her goals entering office in 1979 were to bring down inflation by limiting the money supply, abolish exchange controls thus "exposing the British economy to a global market,"<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.* p 4

<sup>112</sup> Dutton, David. *A History of the Liberal Party Since 1900*. Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan. 2013. Print. p 219

<sup>113</sup> House of Commons, 28 February 1980, MTFW 104316.

<sup>114</sup> Seldon, Anthony, and Daniel Collings. *Britain Under Thatcher*. Essex: Pearson Education Limited, 2000. Print. Seminar Studies in History. p 10

remove the state from industry by means of privatization, restrain government borrowing and spending, and limit the power and influence of trade unions. Although government spending went up during her tenure, reaching at one point a high of 48% of GDP, Thatcher eventually brought taxation down ten percentage points by 1990 and decreased the national debt by another ten percentage points by her eleventh year in office.<sup>115</sup>

Thatcher's zeal for free-market economics allowed for more than 50 enterprises to be privatized during her three terms. Most notably, she privatized British Petroleum, British Shipbuilders, British Gas, Rolls-Royce, Jaguar, Associated British Ports, British Steel, Water, and Electricity. Although this privatization boom raised 50 billion pounds<sup>116</sup> (GBP) for the Exchequer (Britain's equivalent to the Treasury), the amount of workers employed in manufacturing fell 42%, and overall unemployment increased from 5.3% to 11.9% during her time in office.<sup>117</sup> According to Anthony Seldon and Daniel Collings, authors of *Britain Under Thatcher*, this rise was "a result of the pursuit of economic dogma," and accordingly, "unemployment was allowed to rise needlessly...and an 'underclass' grew greatly in size. The so-called 'Thatcher economic miracle,'" they argue, "was a myth, the creation of the government propaganda machine."<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> Jackson, Ben, and Robert Saunders. "Introduction: Varieties of Thatcherism." *Making Thatcher's Britain*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2012. 1-21. Print. p 15

<sup>116</sup> Osborne, Alistair. "Margaret Thatcher: one policy that led to more than 50 companies being sold or privatised." *The Telegraph* (London). 8 April 2013. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/comment/alistair-osborne/9980292/Margaret-Thatcher-one-policy-that-led-to-more-than-50-companies-being-sold-or-privatised.html>

<sup>117</sup> Ball, James. "The Thatcher effect: what changed and what stayed the same." *The Guardian* (London). 12 April 2013. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/apr/12/thatcher-britain>.

<sup>118</sup> Seldon, Anthony, and Daniel Collings. *Britain Under Thatcher*. Essex: Pearson Education Limited, 2000. Print. Seminar Studies in History. p 84

Thatcher viewed wealth and a healthy economy as products of individual effort and she famously proclaimed “There is no such thing as society!”. Ultimately, it was the individual that was responsible for his or her own welfare; social reform was not part of the duties of government. This worldview was laid out before the General Congress of the Church of Scotland on the Mound in Edinburgh in 1988, when she argued that the creation of wealth was not inherently immoral, and that the Church should teach individual responsibility, quoting St John “If a man will not work, then he shall not eat.”<sup>119</sup> This speech has come to be known as “the Sermon on the Mound,” —a tongue in cheek title referencing the Bible’s “Sermon on the Mount” —referring to the manner in which she spoke, appearing to lecture the Scottish clergymen on charity. As this was pre-devolution, “the Church of Scotland's General Assembly was, at that time, the closest thing Scotland had to a national political assembly,” and Thatcher appeared to not have “realized the political significance of the gathering.”<sup>120</sup>

Three years in particular stand out as particularly definitive during Thatcher’s tenure: 1981, 1984, and 1989. These are the years when the Thatcher administration faced its greatest resistance from voters through civil disobedience and violent protest.

The Irish Republican Army prisoners in HM Prison Maze (located in County Down, Northern Ireland) began a hunger strike in May 1981 to protest their status as criminals and to secure acknowledgment that they were indeed political prisoners. Thatcher refused any concessions, saying “Crime is crime is crime. It is not political.” She was “resolute in her

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<sup>119</sup> Assembly Hall, The Mound, Edinburgh, 21 May 1988, MTFW 107246.

<sup>120</sup> Crawley, William. “Thatcher's 'sermon on the mound.'” *BBC*. 5 May 2009.  
[http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/ni/2009/05/thatchers\\_sermon\\_on\\_the\\_mound.html](http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/ni/2009/05/thatchers_sermon_on_the_mound.html)

attitude that the strikers were common criminals.”<sup>121</sup> Ten Irish nationalists had died of starvation by the time the strike was called off in October. Although she considered this to be a “significant defeat for the IRA,” it ultimately created more support for Sinn Fein. The leader of the hunger strike, Bobby Sands, was elected as a Member of Parliament during this strike but died before taking his seat in the House of Commons. At news of Sands’ death, violent protests erupted in Northern Ireland, killing 68 people, and around 100,000 people attended his funeral.

Simultaneously, the civil servants unions demanded a 15% pay raise, and Thatcher’s government maintained that only 7% was possible. The strike that began in March 1981 lasted for 21 weeks before a compromise of a 7.5% pay raise was reached. Apparently, the unions were willing to take the 7.5% as early as June, but Thatcher balked at any concession and the extra seven weeks of strike cost the taxpayers an additional 500 million pounds. The total cost of the strike was estimated at around one billion pounds,<sup>122</sup> as the delayed tax collection forced the government to borrow money.

In that same year, there were violent riots in London and Liverpool over the economy and unemployment, but “Mrs Thatcher vehemently denied such a connection, refusing to believe that unemployment was the main cause of the rioting and instead took steps to ensure the police were given all the support they needed...Through these turbulent months of 1981, economic policy was to remain unchanged.”<sup>123</sup>

The Miners’ Strike of 1984 is reminiscent of the previous strikes in the 1970s against Edward Heath, and even as far back as the Welsh miners’ strikes of the 1920s. The

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<sup>121</sup> Seldon, Anthony, and Daniel Collings. *Britain Under Thatcher*. Essex: Pearson Education Limited, 2000. Print. Seminar Studies in History. p 17

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.* p 18

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*

announced closure of the coal pits in Northern England, South Wales, and Scotland would eventually lead to at least 20,000 lost jobs. The National Union of Miners, lead by Arthur Scargill, called for a national strike in March 1984. Thatcher demonized the striking miners, calling them “the enemy within.”<sup>124</sup> Overall, the year-long strike resulted in three deaths, 200 arrests, 20,000 injuries from the picket line, most notably the ‘Battle of Orgreave,’ where 5,000 picketers went head to head with 5,000 riot police, and the strike ultimately cost the British taxpayer two billion pounds.<sup>125</sup> Although costly, the hard line Thatcher held ultimately brought down the political power of trade unions in the UK.

The Community Charge, popularly referred to as the Poll Tax, was introduced into Scotland in April 1989, a year prior to its implementation elsewhere in the UK. It was a flat-rate tax designed to serve as a funding source for local government, replacing local rates (property taxes) levied against homeowners. The idea for the Poll Tax was actually put forward by Scottish Conservatives in an attempt to lessen the burden on Conservative Scottish homeowners.<sup>126</sup> While it may have lessened the burden for wealthy Tory landowners, the problem with this flat tax was that it was applied to everyone, irrespective of their ability to pay. The Community Charge lowered the rates for wealthy landowners, but raised the rates for the average Scot. Given that Thatcher’s previous policies such as the

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<sup>124</sup> Margaret Thatcher Foundation Website. Document 105563. Speech.  
<http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/105563> (Accessed 1 July 2017).

<sup>125</sup> Lyons, Kate. “Thirty years after the miners’ strike: Evocative images from the bitter industrial dispute that tore Britain apart.” *The Daily Mail* (London). 2 March 2014.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2571744/The-miners-strike-30-years-Amazing-photographs-industrial-dispute-tore-Britain-apart.html#ixzz4mrTeZ8YP>

<sup>126</sup> Devine, T. M. *Independence or Union: Scotland’s Past and Scotland’s Present*. Falkirk: Allen Lane. 2016. Print. p 180.

privatization or closure of state industries had left one in six Scots unemployed, this was inevitably going to be a public relations disaster.

Thatcher's neo-liberal policies particularly devastated Scotland as it had little other industry at the time. There was little to no effort to lessen the strain of unemployment and new utility costs, as this would entail government intervention. However, the Conservatives could have survived this economic downturn in Scotland had it not been for Thatcher's perceived disdain for the Scots themselves. Her "Sermon on the Mound" speech was seen as condescending, along with her phrases such as "you in Scotland," indicating that it was an alien country.<sup>127</sup> She had repealed the Scotland Act of 1978 that was intended to provide Scotland with a small assembly, and had referred to the published 'Claim of Right' for a Scottish Assembly in 1988 as "mumbo jumbo." While actively campaigning against devolution of any sort, she is also quoted as telling the Scottish Tory Chairman, Michael Ancram, "Michael, I am an English nationalist and never you forget it."<sup>128</sup>

Thatcher had never "won" Scotland in an election, and so the introduction of the Poll Tax in Scotland a year prior to its implementation in England and Wales was a policy that many Scottish felt, and still feel, was a deliberate punishment for their left-leaning politics.<sup>129</sup> Despite the popular mythology surrounding it, the Poll Tax and its early release in Scotland was not the brainchild of a vengeful Thatcher, but the product of misplaced good intentions on the part of her Scottish counterparts in the Conservative party. The Poll Tax was established as a flat-rate tax to replace the rising local property taxes. The taxes in Scotland were set to be raised in 1989, and so Scottish Conservatives lobbied to have the Poll Tax

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<sup>127</sup> "Thatcher: a Figure of Hate in Scotland." *The Herald Scotland* (Glasgow). 8 April 2013. [http://www.heraldsotland.com/news/13099424.Thatcher\\_\\_a\\_figure\\_of\\_hate\\_in\\_Scotland/](http://www.heraldsotland.com/news/13099424.Thatcher__a_figure_of_hate_in_Scotland/)

<sup>128</sup> Devine, p 169.

<sup>129</sup> Devine, 179.



introduced into Scotland before the rates were to be raised, thus saving their constituents from paying more unnecessarily. It was a misguided attempt to earn the support of constituents on the part of the Scottish Conservatives, apparently ignorant of the historical unpopularity of flat-rate taxes in Britain, and unaware of the resentment towards any policy Thatcher's government put forward after inflation, unemployment, and debt continued to rise.

Perhaps there is more to the "guinea pig" narrative, after all, in a memo written by policy advisor Oliver Letwin, the argument for introducing the tax a year early in Scotland was that they could find "undetected gremlins lurking in the proposals" before implementing the tax in England or Wales. Nigel Lawson, Chancellor of the Exchequer, wrote a memo in response, calling the move "politically catastrophic" and "unworkable."<sup>130</sup>

Ultimately, the tax had to be abandoned. Less than half of Scots actually paid the tax, and there were large demonstrations and protests throughout Scotland. A year later in 1990, the Poll Tax incited the most serious riots that London had seen in a century leaving 113 injured and 300 arrested.<sup>131</sup>

### **c. Thatcher's Legacy in Scotland**

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<sup>130</sup> "Secret papers reveal push to 'trailblaze' poll tax in Scotland." *BBC News* Website. 30 December 2014.

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-30610043>

<sup>131</sup> King, Oliver. "The poll tax riot 25 years ago was the day I woke up politically." *The Guardian* (London). 31 March 2015.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/mar/31/poll-tax-riots-25-years-ago-political-awakening-carnage-traffic-square>

The economic policies and perceived attitude of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher created a collective sense of victimization<sup>132</sup> in Scotland. During her first two years in power, one in six Scots became unemployed and Scotland lost 20% of its workforce. The current Scottish minister for health has claimed that it was Thatcher's policies of shutting down entire industries without offering new avenues of employment that led to a 60% rise in deaths of Scottish working age men, due to alcoholism and suicide.<sup>133</sup> Whether the direct causation can be proved or not, the perception of the catastrophic effects of Thatcherism in Scotland looms large and unforgiving in the Scottish collective memory.

Thatcher's policies inadvertently created a hostile mentality between the Scots and English. The Poll Tax helped cement her status as the most reviled politician in Scotland. Her reputation was cemented as "anti-Scottish, uncaring, and a divisive leader who looked after the interests of the rich rather than the population as a whole."<sup>134</sup> A friend of both Margaret and Denis Thatcher defended Mrs Thatcher, saying that the Scots disliked her premiership because "the Scots are a male chauvinist race, and not any longer particularly intelligent, because most of the best people have left Scotland."<sup>135</sup> This, of course, did her no favors. A year after the 1987 election, a poll showed that three-quarter of Scots thought that

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<sup>132</sup> Delacourt, Susan. "Scotland's separatist movement influenced by Margaret Thatcher." *The Star* (Toronto). 14 September 2014.  
[http://www.thestar.com/news/world/2014/09/14/scotlands\\_separatist\\_movement\\_influenced\\_by\\_margaret\\_thatcher.html](http://www.thestar.com/news/world/2014/09/14/scotlands_separatist_movement_influenced_by_margaret_thatcher.html)

<sup>133</sup> Johnson, Simon. "SNP Health Minister: Margaret Thatcher to blame for Scotland's drinking." *The Telegraph*. (London). 2 February 2014.  
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/10613091/SNP-Health-Minister-Margaret-Thatcher-to-blame-for-Scotlands-drinking.html>

<sup>134</sup> Devine, p 181.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid*, p 178.

she ‘treated the Scots as second-class citizens,’ and four out of five polled disliked Thatcher as Prime Minister.<sup>136</sup>

The communal hatred towards Thatcher in Scotland was fueled by the sentiment that “she was a bossy English woman...with the cut-glass voice and an apparently patronising manner”<sup>137</sup> Her unapologetic Englishness while castigating the “culture of dependency”<sup>138</sup> in Scotland fostered an “us versus them” sentiment between Scots and English. Conservative Michael Gove once said that by 1988, “You could only be a good Scot if you were pro-Parliament and anti-Thatcher; the three became one.”<sup>139</sup> The current first minister for Scotland, Nicola Sturgeon, said “Thatcher was the motivation of my entire political career. I hated everything she stood for.”<sup>140</sup> The economic and social crisis and sense of national community in Scotland during and after the Thatcher administration made Scottish Devolution seem inevitable. Margaret Thatcher was, indeed, “the greatest of all Scottish Nationalists”<sup>141</sup> and “the handmaiden for the return of Scottish Democracy.”<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.* p 175

<sup>137</sup> Sir Malcolm Rifkind, ‘Foreward’, in Torrance, David. *‘We in Scotland’: Thatcherism in a Cold Climate*. Edinburgh, 2009.

<sup>138</sup> Hutcheon, Paul and Tom Gordon. “Unrepentant Thatcher Justifies attack on Scotland’s ‘Dependency Culture.’” *The Sunday Herald*. 26 April 2009.

<https://www.pressreader.com/uk/sunday-herald/20090426/281500747194525>

Thatcher encouraged a sentiment in England that Scotland was full of “subsidy junkies,” a claim which was later disproven in 2012 as it found that Scotland did not rely on tax dollars from their neighbors in England.

Hookham, Mark and David Smith. “Scots rejoice as subsidy junkie myth laid to rest.” *The Times* (London). 12 February 2012.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/scots-rejoice-as-subsidy-junkie-myth-laid-to-rest-lv8ldgd9r26>

<sup>139</sup> Devine, p 183.

<sup>140</sup> MacWhirter, Iain. *Tsunami*. Glasgow: Freight Books. 2015. p 59

<sup>141</sup> Charles Kennedy, MP as quoted in Devine, 167.

When Westminster reconvened after Thatcher's death in 2013, Angus Robertson, an SNP MP, stood up to offer his brief condolences and said, "We will never forget, we will never forgive the poll tax being imposed on Scots a year before the rest of the UK. No country should have such policies imposed on it when they were rejected at the ballot box. The existence of the Scottish Parliament and the Welsh National Assembly follows this experience. Margaret Thatcher will be remembered for a long time in Scotland and Wales. She helped remind us that we have a national consensus that values society, values solidarity and values community. For that at least, we can be grateful."<sup>143</sup> Her impact on Scottish political life cannot be overestimated. Her death was nearly three decades after her premiership, and while there was an impressive state-funded funeral in London, there were impromptu parades and street parties in Glasgow, complete with effigies, champagne bottles, and signs proclaiming, "The bitch is dead."<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> Alex Salmond, former MP and former First Minister of Scotland, as quoted in Tharoor, Ishaan. "If Scotland votes for independence, it'll be Margaret Thatcher's fault." *The Washington Post* (Washington DC). 16 September 2014.

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2014/09/16/if-scotland-votes-for-independence-itll-be-margaret-thatchers-fault/?utm\\_term=.9b2706d8fbca](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2014/09/16/if-scotland-votes-for-independence-itll-be-margaret-thatchers-fault/?utm_term=.9b2706d8fbca)

<sup>143</sup> House of Commons Debate. 10 April 2013. Column 1613.

<https://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmhansrd/cm130410/debtext/130410-0001.htm#1304104000001>

<sup>144</sup> Neild, Barry. "Margaret Thatcher's death greeted with street parties in Brixton and Glasgow." *The Guardian* (London). 8 April 2013.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/apr/08/margaret-thatcher-death-party-brixton-glasgow>

## Chapter IV: The Results

### a. Scotland as a Case Study

Scotland is often seen as having a unique national situation among the nations of the UK due to its constitutional status.<sup>145</sup> Although the circumstances by which it joined the UK is peculiar, the nationalist movements in Scotland do not differ so radically from other nationalist movements in the UK as commonly perceived. The impression that Scotland has had a special place in the history of nationalism in the UK has perhaps helped Scottish nationalists achieve their goals before their counterparts in Wales and Cornwall. This cultural myth and subsequent successes have granted legitimacy to the Scottish national movement. Consequently, there is a great deal more information regarding the Scottish economy and Scottish national identity than there is for the other minority nations, which were, and under some conditions still are, considered as part of England.<sup>146</sup> This, of course, distorts the available data for the other nations.

Prior to the “Winter of Discontent,” but shortly after Thatcher assumed leadership of the Conservatives, Tom Nairn published a collection of essays entitled *The Break-Up of Britain* (1977). The work’s seminal contribution is the distinction he draws between the nationalisms of old and “neo-nationalism”<sup>147</sup> that was gaining popularity, particularly in Scotland. He provided a Marxist critique of Britain as a nation, but also as a multi-national state about to crumble in the way that other European states had in the interwar period. However, this “neo-nationalism” as Nairn describes as a class-based nationalism, is not final

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<sup>145</sup> The list of possible works that subscribe to this narrative would be too extensive, but a preliminary list would include Christopher A. Whatley’s *The Scots and the Union, Independence or Union* by T.M. Devine, *Scotland’s Future History* by Stuart McHardy, and *Impaled Upon a Thistle: Scotland Since 1800* by Ewen A. Cameron.

<sup>146</sup> See information regarding the Wales and Berwick Act as discussed in Chapter II.

<sup>147</sup> Nairn, Tom. *The Break-Up of Britain*. London: Verso Books. 1981. Print. pp 128.

evolution of Scottish nationalism. Nationalism in Scotland did divert from the traditional romantic nationalism rooted in ethnocentrism to an economically-based nationalism, but it did not emerge as a multi-ethnic, multi-national(!) nationalist movement until the 1990s.

Nairn's critique of the uneven economic development within the UK as divided by nation and his prediction of a federalization, if not the complete "break up of Britain," was published soon after the SNP successfully gained seats at Westminster. Although these essays were written quite a time ago, the conclusions actually proved prescient decades later. Indeed, the spectacular failure of the 1979 Devolution Referendum quelled some of the nationalist support, but then the impact of Thatcherism on the Scottish economy reinvigorated support for devolution in Scotland and Wales—increasing the odds enormously. Michael Mann's book review on *The Break-Up of Britain* emphasized that, according "to Nairn, Scottish nationalism is not a reaction to capitalist development, it is capitalist development."<sup>148</sup> The original impetus for Nairn's essays, the supposed rise of nationalism inside the UK, was the success of the SNP at Westminster in the 1970s. For the first time since its inception, the SNP held more than one seat at Westminster—first rising to 7 seats in February 1974, and then 11 seats in October 1974. This sudden rise would appear to show that there was a new nationalist movement in Scotland—that the SNP was becoming part of the mainstream. However, in the 1979 election, (two years after Nairn published *The Break-Up of Britain*) the SNP dropped back down to two seats. Until the radical 2015 election, when the SNP rose to gain 56 of the 59 available seats for Scotland, the party was never able to maintain more than 6 seats at Westminster. The rise of nationalism anticipated

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<sup>148</sup> Mann, Michael. "Review: The Break-up of Britain: Crisis and Neo-Nationalism by Tom Nairn." *The British Journal of Sociology*, vol. 29, no. 4, 1978, pp. 528–530. JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/589681](http://www.jstor.org/stable/589681).

in the 1970s was a mere “flash in the pan,”<sup>149</sup> the result of protest votes against the ineffectiveness of the recent Conservative, then Labour governments.

The first devolution referendum was also in 1979, and as discussed previously, ultimately did not pass, thus making the “break-up of Britain,” seem far less likely. However, the new century proves to be more promising for nationalists in Scotland. The SNP has maintained leadership in the Scottish Government since 2011, and remains the third largest party in the UK despite losing seats in the 2017 election.

Nairn’s main premise had been that support for independence increases where poverty increases. “The arrival of nationalism in a distinctly modern sense was tied to the political baptism of the lower classes...nationalist movements have been invariably populist in outlook and sought to induct lower classes into political life.”<sup>150</sup> Nairn could not have predicted the full extent of the trauma caused by Thatcherism in Scotland during the late 1980s. Nonetheless he added a “postscript 1981” in subsequent editions, attempting to address the effects of Thatcherism as of that year. Despite having an entire chapter entitled “Old and New Scottish Nationalism,” nationalism in the UK, particularly in Scotland, had yet to become new again until the next century.

## **b. Unemployment and Deprivation**

### *Unemployment*

As discussed in the previous chapter, there is a definitive collective memory regarding Thatcher and her policies in Scotland. This cannot be overstated. The Scottish economy was mainly industrial, with one out of three Scots employed in heavy industry. The

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<sup>149</sup> Devine, p 127.

<sup>150</sup> Nairn, Tom. *The Break-Up of Britain*. Verso Editions: London. 1981. Print. p 41

closures of mines, plants, and factories as a result of Thatcherism would often end up leaving three generations of the same family unemployed.<sup>151</sup>

Although there are some strong arguments (mostly made from the other side of the border) that these industries were already failing— that Thatcher, in fact, subsidized these plants at great expense until the absolute end— collective memory remains strong. As seen in Figure 1, the unemployment levels for the UK as a whole skyrocketed. However, it was the high levels of unemployment and subsequent social decay in Scotland that are the most remembered, and are blamed on Thatcher and the Conservative Party.

The rise in unemployment and collective hatred towards Thatcher and all that she represented was not unique to Scotland, but the feeling that many Scots have that Thatcher specifically targeted Scotland remains strong. Crediting Thatcher with the success of Scottish devolution has become the dominant narrative. Indeed, the “new nationalism,” as it is referred to, “was promoted by Scotland’s civic and media commentators to give an intellectual coherence to the nation’s rejection of Thatcherite values.”<sup>152</sup>

As early as 1984, it was evident that the rise in unemployment was not distributed evenly. However, Scotland was not the only minority nation within the UK affected. Scotland, Wales, Cornwall, and patches of England were the hardest hit, with unemployment levels in Scotland and Wales rising to levels last seen during the Great Depression.<sup>153</sup>

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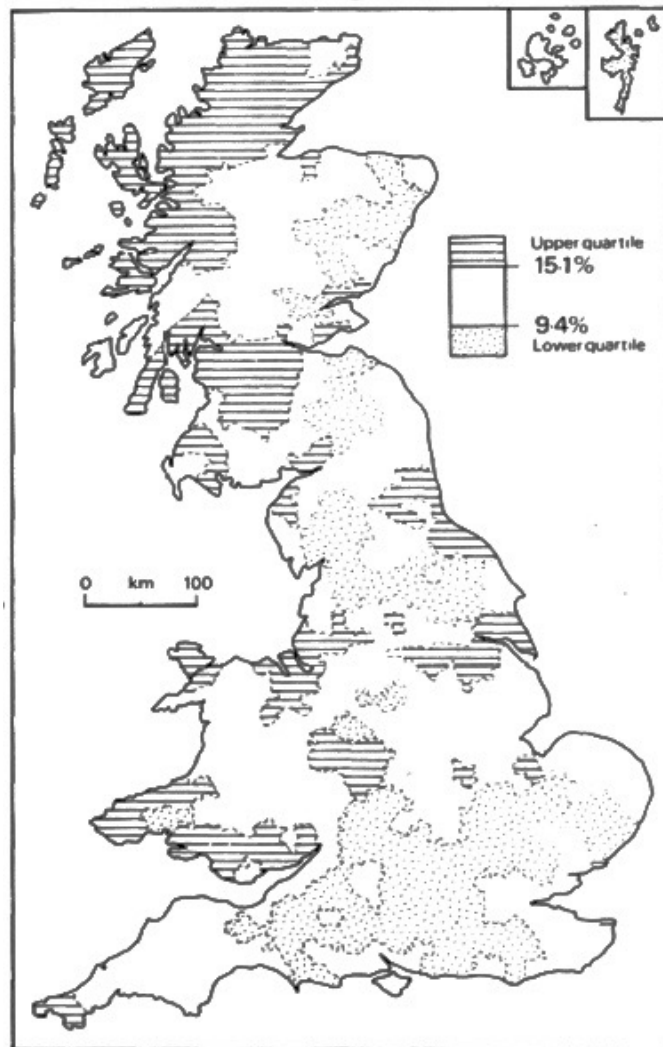
<sup>151</sup> Naysmith, Stephen. “Rigidity of Iron Lady's ideology aided the devastation of heavy industry in Scotland.” *Herald Scotland* (Glasgow). 8 April 2013.

[http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/13099505.Rigidity\\_of\\_Iron\\_Lady\\_s\\_ideology\\_aided\\_the\\_devastation\\_of\\_heavy\\_industry\\_in\\_Scotland/](http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/13099505.Rigidity_of_Iron_Lady_s_ideology_aided_the_devastation_of_heavy_industry_in_Scotland/)

<sup>152</sup> Gallagher, Tom. *The Illusion of Freedom: Scotland Under Nationalism*. New York: Columbia University Press. 2010. Print. p 82

<sup>153</sup> Jackson and Sanders, p 172.





**Fig. 2. Local areas of high and low unemployment rates in Great Britain, August 1984.**

**Figure 2.** *Source:* Salt, John. "The Geography of Unemployment in the United Kingdom in the 1980s." In: *Espace, Populations, Sociétés*, 1985-2. Chômage, non-emploi, sous-emploi. p 349.

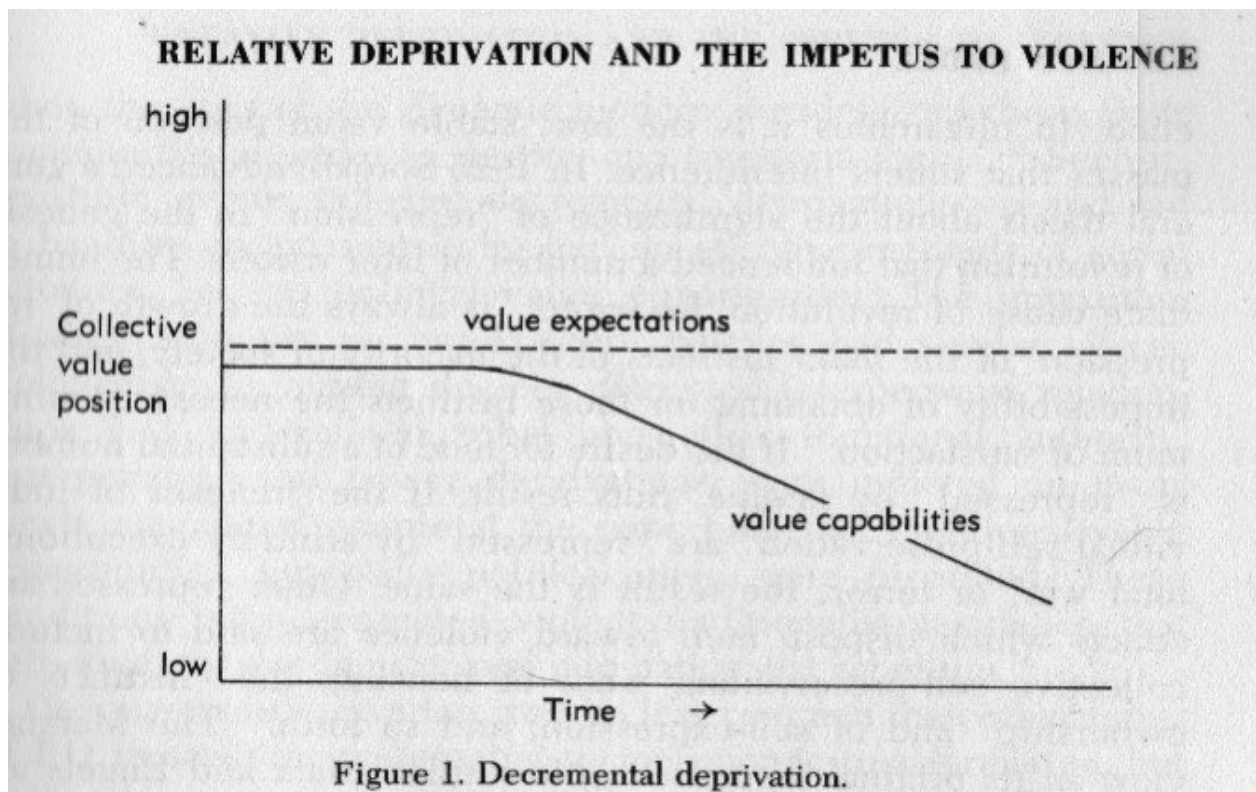
## *Deprivation*

Ted Robert Gurr's seminal essay, *Why Men Rebel* (1971), uses a sociological and psychological approach to explain and predict when societies engage in political violence. At the most basic level, mankind are conditioned to "avoid unpleasant stimuli" via creativity or destruction, political violence belonging to the latter route. Gurr defines "relative deprivation" as an actor's perception of deprivation as a result of a discrepancy between what he labels as "value capabilities" (what is possible to attain) and "value expectations" (what an actor believes he or she is entitled to).<sup>154</sup> After postulating three psychological assumptions, Gurr then provides an outline of three patterns of relative deprivation that have the capability to lead to political violence: decremental deprivation, aspirational deprivation, and progressive deprivation. Decremental deprivation is when value expectations remain constant, but value capability decreases substantially over time. Aspirational deprivation occurs when value expectations rise but value capabilities stay at normal levels. Finally, progressive deprivation occurs when both value capabilities and value expectations rise concurrently, but then the value capabilities take a sudden and rapid downturn.

Scotland under Thatcher experienced all three levels of relative deprivation that Gurr discussed. Decremental deprivation occurred in some communities, as the local industrial plants that employed generations of Scots were shut down and there was no available alternative employment.

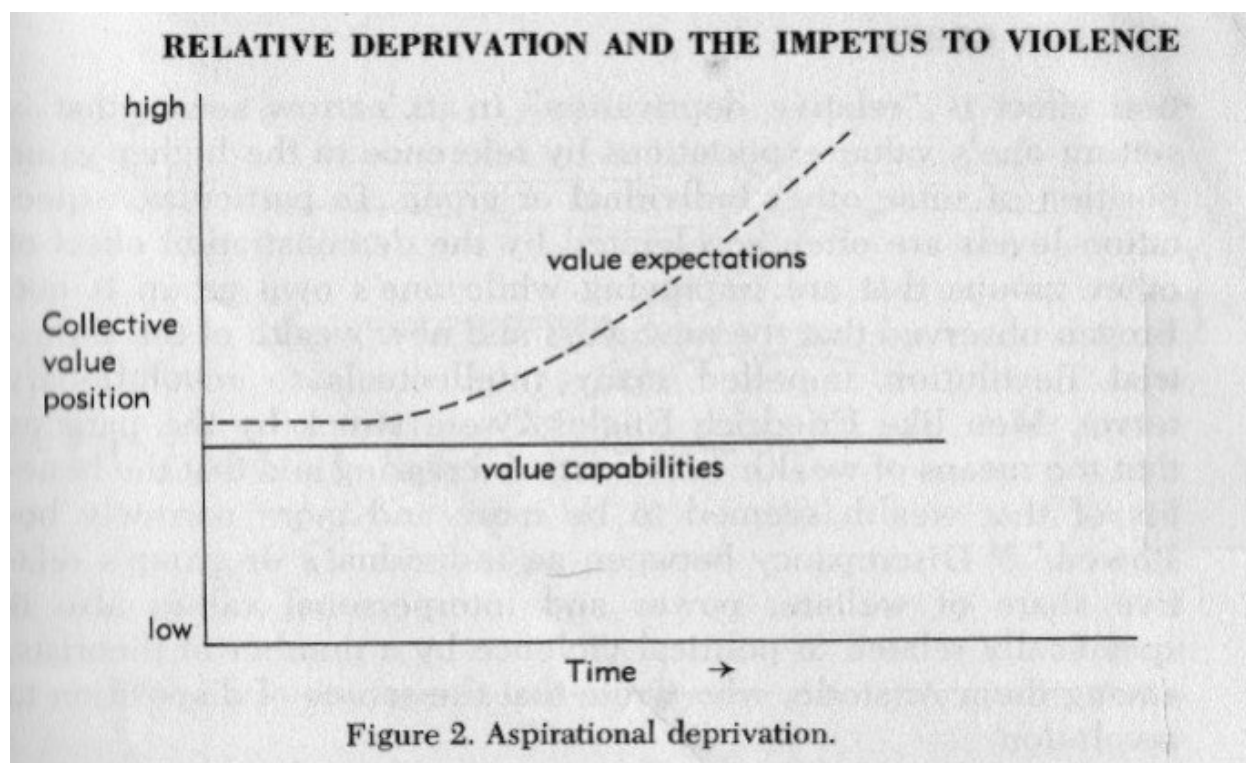
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<sup>154</sup> Gurr, Ted Robert. *Why Men Rebel*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1970. Print. pp 22-58.



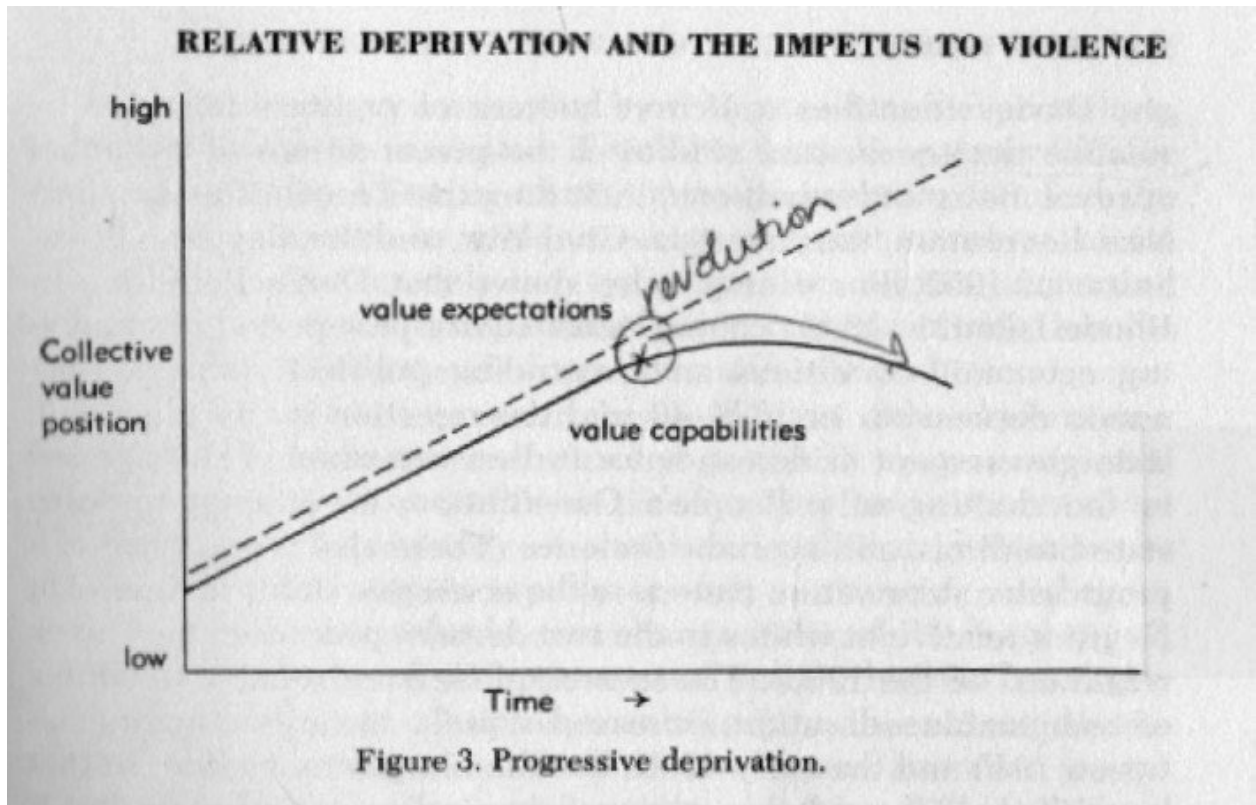
**Figure 3.** Source: Gurr, Ted Robert. *Why Men Rebel*. Princeton University Press: Princeton. 1971. Print. p 47.

There was aspirational deprivation in other communities: for example, one of Thatcher's main policies, the right to buy council houses, ended up bankrupting families. Those who were renting state-subsidized houses were unable to make the mortgage payments set by the neoliberal state. Aspirational deprivation also occurred when oil was discovered in the North Sea, and yet Scots remained unemployed and unable to receive the benefits of the oil, as revenues were deposited into the Bank of England. The economy across Scotland varies, from the agricultural and isolated Highlands to the industrial center of Glasgow.



**Figure 4.** *Source: Ibid. p 51.*

Some other communities, such as Edinburgh, witnessed a rise in expectations and capabilities with the introduction of neoliberalism, but then capabilities experienced a rapid decline, and thus progressive deprivation set in.



**Figure 5.** Source: *Ibid.* p 53.

Despite all of this occurring in Scotland, there was no large-scale political violence or revolt as Gurr would have predicted. Gurr concludes in 1971 that the stability and lack of political violence in the UK is “conventionally credited to the evolution of complex and responsive political institutions, supported by the widespread fundamental agreement on the procedures if not necessarily the purposes of political activity.”<sup>155</sup> Ironically, the Troubles in Northern Ireland were already in full swing, having started in 1968. However, the Troubles were also a product of a specific set of circumstances unique to the relationship between Ireland the UK, and to discredit Gurr as a result of his erroneous conclusions regarding the political atmosphere of the UK would be to throw the baby out with the bathwater. He is

<sup>155</sup> Gurr, p 286.

correct, in that *Britain* did not experience political violence, but incorrect in his assumption that the United Kingdom's regime type protects the state from political violence.

It is perhaps because there was such strife in Northern Ireland that, despite the relative deprivation occurring in Scotland, Scots did not resort to political violence. Thatcher's policies of refusing to bow down to nationalist groups and the violence against civilians by British troops may have acted as a deterrent to nationalist groups in Scotland that would have otherwise gone the traditional route of rebellion.

If rebellion could be conceived as political nationalism, then Gurr's core hypotheses are still valid for Scotland. Although Scotland did not resort to political violence, the Scots did rebel via the ballot box, and perhaps rebelled more effectively than their counterparts in Northern Ireland. The Conservative party was left with only one seat in Scotland, and Labour and the Liberal Democrats met the same fate less than two decades later. The Scots rebelled by restoring the Scottish Parliament and making their nationalist separatist political party, the SNP, the third largest political party in the UK.

Although there have been scores of other works regarding nationalism, rebellion, and national wealth, the majority of these focus on the ethnic or violent components of intra-state conflict. Virtually none of these works address the complexity of national identity in the UK, and the few that do use Northern Ireland as a singular token case, mislabeling the Troubles as a solely ethnic or religious conflict.

One problem with applying ethnic conflict models to the nationalist movements in the UK is that these national identities are not based on ethnicity alone. Another is that, as discussed in the second chapter of this thesis, the violence in Northern Ireland virtually ended

with the Good Friday agreement, and the island of Great Britain has not been witness to violent nationalism since the last Jacobite rebellion.

James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin argue in “Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War,” that states with diverse and antagonistic ethnic and religious groups are no more likely to suffer from civil war than other states, which lends credence to the theory that neither ethnicity nor religion are the reasons behind nationalist conflict in the UK. However, their findings that the factors that best predict civil war—large populations, instability, and poverty—do not necessarily correlate to current situation in the UK. The populations of the minority nations of the United Kingdom are all relatively small (none reach above six million), and despite the rise in unemployment levels during the Thatcher years, on the whole, the UK has continuously been one of the wealthiest states in the world.

Instability also could not necessarily be applied to the UK, as both the monarchy and parliament have been stable and continuous since The Restoration (when the monarchy was reinstated after the English Civil War), and the territorial integrity of the UK as a state has been unchallenged since Irish independence in 1922. However, if we consider instability in a more nuanced light, such as an instability of trends rather than governments, we may be able to apply Fearon and Laitin’s model.

As discussed briefly in the Introduction chapter, Duverger’s Law suggests stability as states that use FPTP voting systems will eventually settle on two major political parties. However, after Thatcher’s tenure, this political stability was thrown into turmoil, as the Liberal Democrats, which had been established only in 1988, began to win seats at Westminster and local councils, and nationalist political parties, such as the SNP and Plaid

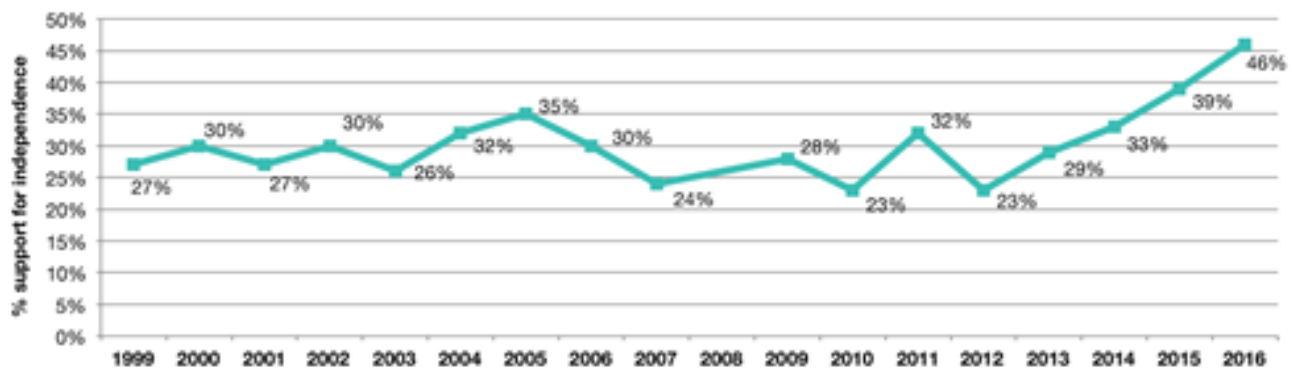
Cymru, also began to win seats. The two-party stability of Duverger's Law has not been valid in the UK since the end of the Thatcher era.

Ultimately, as a former colonizer, the UK has taken the back seat to its former colonies as the center of research regarding civil war, rebellion, and nationalist conflict. Although the violence is at a minimum in comparison, this does not negate the presence of conflict. Further research that would include more subtle indicators of nationalist conflict rather than guerilla warfare and ethnic divisions would greatly advance our understanding of national identity and intra-state conflict. The UK may not fit into any of the ethnic conflict or civil unrest models provided and used by scholars, however, it is very clear that the UK does have nationalist conflict and thus there is a need to reevaluate how the field defines nationalist conflict.

### **c. Nationalism after Thatcher**

Although the independence referendum of 2014 failed 55% to 45%, it did so by a remarkably close margin. A majority of Scots listed the EU membership as one of the main reasons for voting No, as there were threats issued by various members of the Cameron government claiming that the UK would veto an independent Scotland's bid for membership. Even though the SNP lost seats in the most recent election (although still holding the majority of seats for Scotland), today support for Scottish independence is at an all time high.





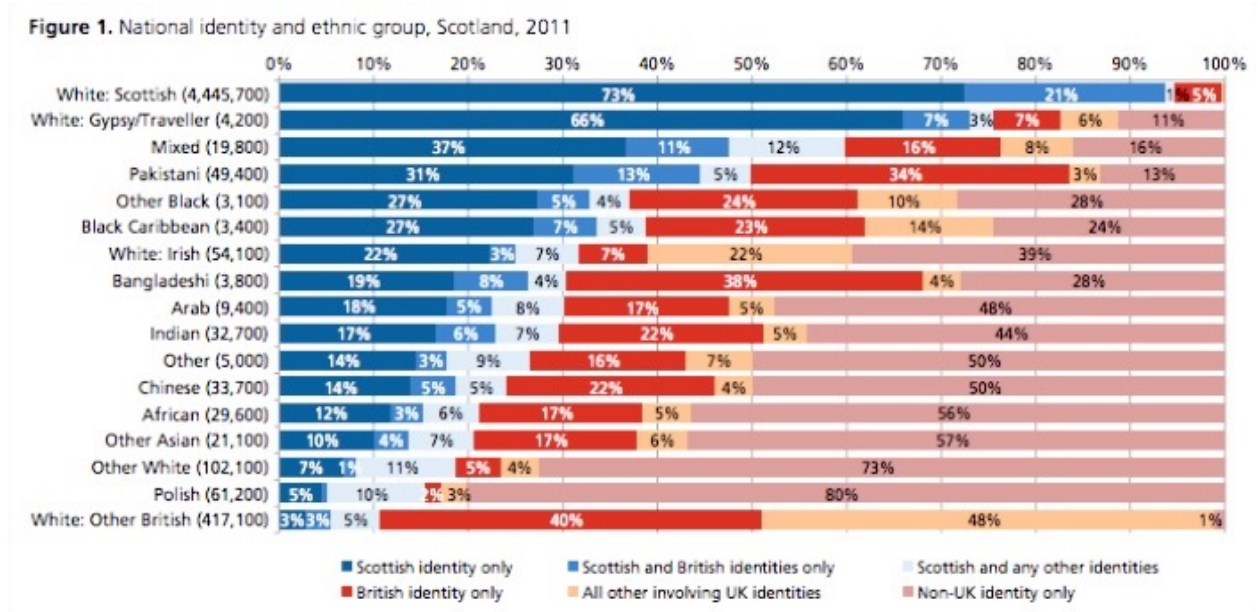
**Figure 6.** *Source:* Scottish Social Attitudes. “From IndyRef1 to IndyRef2? The State of Nationalism in Scotland.” (2016)

This rise in support for independence can be attributed to the decremental deprivation Scots feel as a result of Brexit. The Scots voted against Brexit in every constituency, and as mentioned previously, a majority of Scots voted against independence to ensure that Scotland would maintain EU membership. Their expectations remained stable, and yet the capabilities, such as all the perceived benefits of being EU citizens, have declined.

However, Scottish nationalism did not emerge as a result of Brexit. The 1997 Devolution referendum, rise of the SNP, and subsequent independence referendum all happened before the Brexit referendum of 2016. The Devolution referendum of 1979 may have failed on a technicality (see Chapter II), but the lack of turnout could be said to speak for itself. Between 1979 and 1997, the Scots experienced Thatcherism, which not only invigorated a new sense of nationalism, but propelled nationalists to change tactics. The SNP boasts multi-ethnic leadership, and independence groups vary beyond the traditional “Braveheart” Highlanders opposed to British rule. Nationalism has not simply become

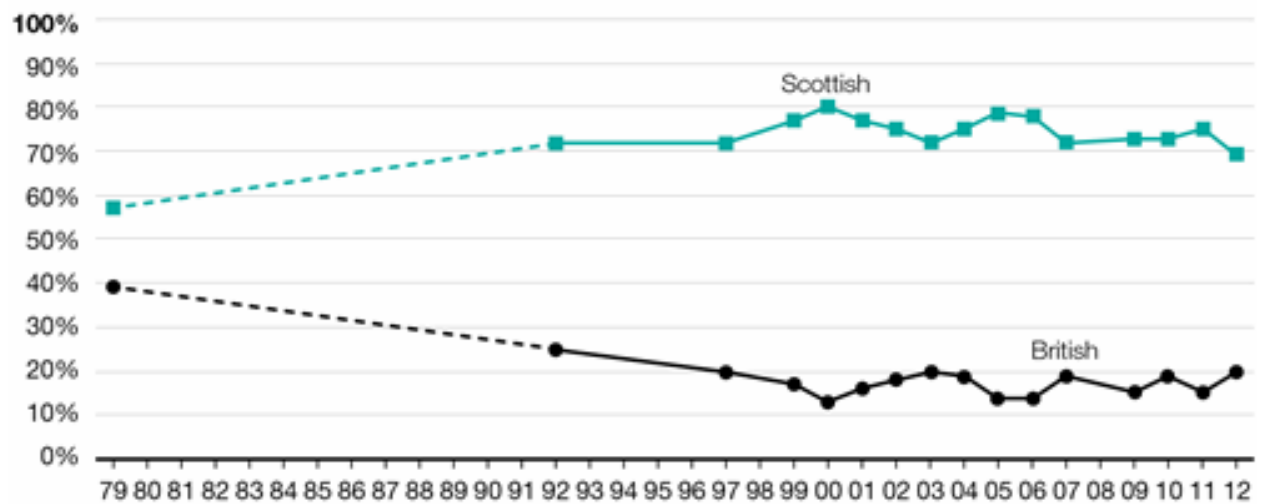
popular, it has become mainstream. The correlation between the collective memory regarding Thatcher and the trends in national identity is impossible to ignore.

The rise in Scottish identity along with the drop in British identity following the Thatcher years lends credence to this narrative, along with a surprising rise in ethnic minorities (those that are non-white) identifying as Scottish rather than British. According to a 2014 study by the Centre on Dynamics of Ethnicity, *Who Feels Scottish?*, around 94% of those born in Scotland identify as Scottish, and about a quarter of those who emigrated to Scotland from ethnic minority groups, identify as Scottish over British.



**Figure 7.** Source: Simpson, Ludi and Andrew Smith. “Who Feels Scottish?: National Identities and Ethnicity in Scotland.” *Dynamics of Diversity: Evidence From the 2011 Census*. Centre on Dynamics of Ethnicity, Aug. 2014. Figure 3.

**Figure 6.1 Trends in 'forced choice' national identity, in Scotland, 1979–2012**



Source: 1979–1997: Scottish Election Study; 1999–2012: Scottish Social Attitudes  
The data on which Figure 6.1 is based can be found in the appendix to this chapter

**Figure 8.** Source: Jeffrey, Charlie et al. “Taking England Seriously: The New English Politics.” *The Future of England Survey 2014*. 2014. Figure 6.1.

In short, the Thatcher era changed nationalism in the UK. The old tactics of rebellion and ethnic romanticism of the Jacobites fell by the wayside, giving way to practical economic reasoning and recent collective memory of a nation abused. There is significant correlation between the rise in unemployment and Thatcherism, the rise in unemployment and the rise national identity, and then subsequent rise of the SNP.

All nationalist movements will inevitably use the nationalists of the past to garner legitimacy and create a sense of nation-hood. The SNP, like all nationalists, use history to their advantage in order to paint a picture of a nation held hostage in a Union, destined to be ruled by governments that their people did not vote for. However, these nationalist movements have changed radically from their predecessors. Thatcherism created a sense of

urgency amongst the nationalists, and the method by which these groups used to achieve their nationalist goals changed. Cultural revivals and ethnic heritage sites had never been as successful as had been hoped for, and there was less reason to expect more success as immigration rose. Since 2001, Scotland's immigrant population has doubled.<sup>156</sup> Neo-liberalism was a blessing in the sense that its effects gave nationalists an opportunity to expand and, for lack of a better word, exploit feelings of deprivation. Thatcherism provided an opportunity for nationalists to capitalize on collective memory that Thatcher was "anti-Scottish," but also created the need for nationalism to embark on a new journey. The new nationalism is practical and mainstream, no longer the material of legends and mythology.

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<sup>156</sup> Gardham, Magnus. "Number of immigrants living in Scotland doubles in a decade." *The Herald* (Glasgow). Web. 2 December 2013.

[http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/13134590.Number\\_of\\_immigrants\\_living\\_in\\_Scotland\\_doubles\\_in\\_a\\_decade/](http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/13134590.Number_of_immigrants_living_in_Scotland_doubles_in_a_decade/)

## Chapter V: Conclusion

It can be concluded that there is a strong correlation between the advent of Thatcherism and the rise in popularity of the nationalist political party in Scotland, the SNP. The increase in relative deprivation experienced as a result of the neoliberal economic policies pursued by the Thatcher administration during the 1980s coincides with the rise in minority national identity and the subsequent surge in popularity of nationalist political party membership.

However, the rise in popularity of nationalist movements is not a direct effect of relative deprivation caused by Thatcherism. The perception of deprivation is not a new narrative among minority nations, nor is the enduring sentiment of nationalism a recent development in the United Kingdom. The novelty of this situation is that the manifestation and operation of minority nationalist movements within the UK changed significantly, from cultural revivals and ethnocentric romanticism to the contemporary, pan-ethnic, economic “civic” nationalism.

It is worthwhile to explore a possible effect of the rise of minority nationalism on majority nationalism, that is to say, English nationalism, in the UK.

### *What about England?*

There are other ramifications to the effects of Thatcherism on minority nationalist movements in the United Kingdom. In particular, there has been an unprecedented rise of English nationalism as manifested by the rise in popularity of far-right political parties which according to Charlie Jeffrey, et al, in 2014, is the result of Scottish devolution.

When polled, English voters increasingly felt that the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), a far-right political party, was the only political party that would look out for England’s interests.<sup>157</sup> The common theme in survey results is that the English feel that they get “less than their fair share” and that Scotland gets “more than their fair share.”

**Table 21: Attitudes by Party Support, 2014 (%)**

	England	Labour	LibDem	Cons	UKIP
<b>Concern about Scotland</b>					
England less than fair share	31	23	28	42	50
Scotland more than fair share	38	30	43	52	53
Agree reduce public spending in Scotland to UK average	56	50	54	69	70
Agree Scots MPs not to vote on English laws	62	52	67	73	81
<b>Euro-scepticism</b>					
EU a bad thing	34	23	13	39	81
Vote to leave the EU	40	28	17	49	88
EU has most influence over how England is run	26	14	12	30	63
<b>Immigration</b>					
10/10 in favour of restricting immigration	44	32	21	53	85
EU has made migration too easy	67	60	49	80	94
<b>English institutions</b>					
Urgent action on how England is governed	30	20	35	41	42
English votes on English laws	69	61	71	79	90
Elected regional assemblies should have most influence	10	12	18	5	11
More powers for local councils	39	51	43	26	40
<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>3705</b>	<b>934</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>969</b>	<b>415</b>

**Figure 9.** Source: Jeffrey, et al. “Taking England Seriously.” *The Future of England Survey 2014*.

2014. Table 21.

<sup>157</sup> Jeffrey, Charlie, et al. “Taking England Seriously: The New English Politics.” *The Future of England Survey 2014*. 2014.

This resentment, if not jealousy, towards Scottish devolution in combination with the sentiment that English voters are not represented by their government and the belief that foreign nations hold influence over that government signal that this new rise of nationalism in England is more a result of political insecurity than ethnic chauvinism. This, in fact, is a prime example of Gurr's "aspirational deprivation."<sup>158</sup> Although the English have not actually lost any capabilities, there is a perceived loss as they did not gain what other nations had gained—autonomy. Significantly, Charlie Jeffrey et al found that "dissatisfaction and Englishness were strongly and positively associated with one another," in their *Future of England 2014* survey. England was the original nation of the United Kingdom, and, according to T. M. Devine, was a state created in the interests of the wealthy. The majority of those in England that did not necessarily benefit economically from this hegemony, such as the northern counties of England, and do not feel that they are represented by any government. In fact, around 34% of English responded to a 2014 survey that they would support English independence.<sup>159</sup>

The issue at hand is that the majority nation of this Union feels under-represented and denied self-determination, and the shift towards the right is perhaps in large part a reaction to the neo-nationalists in the minority nations. It is not that so many English are far-right conservatives—but that there has been no other political party interested in cultivating a healthy support of English ethnic identity. According to a study conducted by Michael Skey at the University of East London, there is a perceived notion that English cultural activities

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<sup>158</sup> See Figure 3.

<sup>159</sup> Wyn Jones, Richard et al. "England and Its Two Unions: The Anatomy of a Nation and its Discontents." Institute for Public Policy Research. July 2013. p 13.

and groups are “ignored or actively suppressed by government officials.”<sup>160</sup> Skey and his colleagues also found that there is a broad consensus among English voters that there was an “infiltration of the government by Scottish elites” that relished in the ability to “undermine Englishness.”<sup>161</sup> This fear was satirized, if not validated, by television shows such as *The Thick of It*, where there is constant reference to the “Caledonian Mafia” in Whitehall (the British Civil Service).

### *Implications*

Although the United Kingdom is unique in many aspects, it is not the only multinational state, nor is it the only one that utilizes a FPTP voting system. This means that other states will be facing the same challenges to the authority of a central government via nationalist-separatist movements, if they are not already. As the events unfold in the UK, one should look to India to compare cases. Although there are large differences in population size, number of minority groups, and overall wealth, the rise of nationalist movements and nationalist political parties are a common trend that cannot be dismissed.

As detailed in this thesis, nationalist conflict is not inherently violent, however, this lack of violence does not preclude effectiveness. This has two implications: Firstly, nationalist movements need not resort to violence as means to achieve their ends. Secondly, political revolution and national turmoil may be well underway before the effects are even recognized in a state because the traditional indicators do not apply.

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<sup>160</sup> Skey, Michael. “‘Sod them, I’m English’: The Changing of Status of the ‘Majority’ English in Post-Devolution Britain.” *Ethnicities* 12(1), pp 106-125. 2011.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*



### *Final Thoughts*

An interesting point about this syncopated rise of nationalism is that as both nationalist movements' popularity appear to be the result of a prevalent perception of relative deprivation, each nationalist movement believes the other to be the source of their deprivation. Despite being the majority nation and overall cultural hegemon, England exhibits traits of a minority nation.

The desire for increased autonomy, if not complete sovereignty, has been a common theme throughout the history of the nationalist movements in the United Kingdom. But the sudden and extreme implementation of neoliberal economic policies during the tenure of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher fueled old narratives of dispossession and discrimination and reaffirmed minority national identity. As minority nations such as Scotland and Wales were able to utilize the popular sentiments of deprivation and galvanize collective memory towards increasing autonomy, England was deprived the opportunity for self-determination.

The United Kingdom appears to be on a trajectory towards federalism, as British identity decreases and minority nationalism grows stronger and becomes more effective. In the words of the Irish poet and nationalist William B. Yeats, "The centre cannot hold."<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> This quote is taken from Yeats' poem, "The Second Coming." 1919.

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